

A N

E S S A Y

O N

PUNCTUATION.

Ἡ ΦΥΣΙΣ ΑΞΙΟΙ ΔΙΑΙΡΕΙΝ ΤΟΝ ΛΟΓΟΝ.

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P H I L A D E L P H I A :

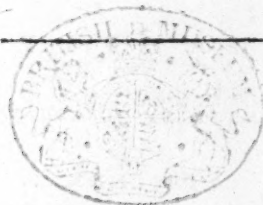
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ADVERTISEMENT.

“**Y**OUNG people should be early taught to distinguish the stops, commas, accents, and other gramatical marks, in which the correctness of writing consists ; and it would be proper to begin with explaining to them their nature and use *.”

* ROLLIN on the Belles Letters, b. i. c. 1.



T H E

P R E F A C E.

TH E art of punctuation is of infinite consequence in WRITING; as it contributes to the perspicuity, and consequently to the beauty, of every composition.

It is likewise of the utmost importance in READING; as a clear, easy, natural modulation of the voice depends, in a great measure, on the pauses, or the art of dividing compounded sentences in proper places*. In this circumstance, books are no

* See *An Introduction to the Study of Polite Literature*, 12mo. 1782.

P R E F A C E.

certain guides ; for most of them are carelessly and irregularly pointed ; and many pauses are necessary in reading, where no point is inserted by the printer.

Some imagine, that punctuation is an arbitrary invention, depending on fancy and caprice. But this is a mistake. It is founded on rational and determinate principles.

The following Essay is drawn up for the use of those, who have formed no regular or consistent idea on the subject. Its design is to furnish them with a system of clear and practical rules, illustrated by examples.

A N
E S S A Y
O N
P U N C T U A T I O N.

C H A P. I.

On the ORIGIN *of the* POINTS.

THE ancient way of writing among the Greeks and Romans was in capitals, placed at equal distances, without any blank spaces to separate the words, or any marks to divide or subdivide the sentences*. The celebrated Chronicle of the Arundel Marbles*, the

* Antiqui, tam Græci quam Latini, continua literarum serie scribebant, nullis super aut inter verba distinctionibus, aut accentibus, adscriptis. Ejusmodi adhuc visuntur multi codices, tum Græci, tum Latini. MORIN. lib. ii. Exercit. xvii. c. i. p. 477.

* The Arundel Marbles are SAID to have been engraved 263 years before the Chrillian æra ---But is there no room to question their authenticity?

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Alexandrian manuscript in the British Museum, the manuscript, containing the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles in Greek and Latin, presented to the University of Cambridge by Beza, in 1581, the small fragment of Livy, discovered by Mr. Bruns in the Vatican at Rome, in 1772, and a great variety of other Greek and Latin manuscripts of the most ancient date, are written in capitals, without any distances between the words, without any accents, and, for the most part, without points.

In some inscriptions and manuscripts, all the words are separated by dots or periods. In others, only complete sentences or paragraphs are distinguished by points, or blank spaces.

The origin of the points is not easily traced in the depths of antiquity. Suidas tells us, that the PERIOD and the COLON were discovered and explained by Thrasymachus †, about 380 years before the Christian æra. But it is most probable,

† Ὁς πρῶτος περιόδον καὶ κῶλον κατέδειξε. Qu primus periodum et colon monstravit. SUIDAS de Thrasymacho.

that by periods and colons, Suidas only means, the composition of such sentences, and members of sentences, as Demetrius Phalerus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Cicero, Quintilian, and other ancient writers, have distinguished by these terms. In favour of this opinion, it may be observed, that Thrasymachus is said to have been the first, who studied oratorical numbers, which entirely consisted in the artificial structure of periods and colons*.

From a passage in Aristotle, in which he says, “It is difficult διασιζαι [to point] the writings of Heraclitus, on account of their obscurity,” it seems very evident, that punctuation was known in the time of that philosopher†.

* Princeps inveniendi fuit Thrasymachus; cujus omnia nimis etiam extant scripta numerose. Cic. Orator, § 33. SUIDAS de Thrasymacho.

† Τα γὰρ Ἡρακλείτου διασιζαι ἐργοί. Rhet. l. iii. c. 5. Heraclitus flourished, bef. Chr. 502. Aristotle died bef. Chr. 322, aged 63. Vid. CLERICI Art. Crit. p. iii. sect. 1. c. 10. The learned Dr. Edward Bernard refers the knowledge of punctuation to the time of Aristotle; for he says: “Ante Chr. 330, Theles [posituræ seu puncta] A. υποσχηματισμοῦ. A' σιγμη μέση, κωλον. A' σιγμη τελειή, περιόδος. BERN. Oribus erud. Literat. tab. xxx. edit. 1700.

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Nevertheless, Salmasius, Huetius, Montfaucon, and other learned writers, assert, that the points are of later date ; and ascribe the invention to Aristophanes, a grammarian of Byzantium, about a hundred and twenty years after the death of Aristotle *.

Though I do not find any authority for this assertion, there is no doubt, but that a mark of some sort, which was called *συγμη*, was used by Aristophanes, and other grammarians of that age.

In the time of Adrian, that is, about the year 127, Nicanor, a grammarian of Alexandria, wrote six books on punctuation in general ; and other tracts on the use of the points in Homer and Callimachus †.

* Quod ad Græca exemplaria attinet, ante Aristophanem, qui primus *πρὸς ὁδὸν* excogitavit, et accentus invenit, nulla fuit literarum distinctio, neque subdistinctio, Uno ac perpetuo ductu, sine ullo interstitio, voces omnes exarari solebant, et sententiæ etiam continuari. SALMASII Epist. ad Sarravium, inter Epist. Sarravianas CLXXXIII. edit. 1697, p. 186. HUET. Præf. ad Orig. Comment. MONTF. Palæog. Græca, l. i. c. 4.

† Περὶ *συγμῆς* τῆς καθόλου, de Interpunctione universæ ; et Περὶ *συγμῆς* τῆς παρ' Ὀμήρῳ, καὶ παρὰ Καλλιμάχῳ,

Twenty or thirty years afterwards, Apollonius Alexandrinus composed a treatise on grammar, in which he speaks of punctuation, as a circumstance well known in Greek manuscripts, at least, in the schools of the grammarians*.

In a Greek epigram, cited by Leo Allatius, we are informed, that one Cometas revised and pointed the poems of Homer. But, as it is difficult to as-

de Interpunctione apud Homerum et Callimachum. On this account Nicanor was called *στιγματίας*, Stigmatias, five notis compunctus. It may be observed, that Suidas uses the word *στιγμής* in the singular number, not *στιγμων*, as some writers have quoted him, in the plural. This is a presumptive argument, that there was but one point made use of in the time of Nicanor. SUIDAS. Vossius de Hist. Græc. l. ii. c. 12. p. 221.

* This writer observes, that articles, used as pronouns, cannot be enclitical; because they stand at the beginning of a clause, referring to the preceding part of the sentence: as in these two passages, *ὅς μαλα πολλὰ πλάγχθη*,—*ἢ μὲν Ἀχαιοὶ ἀλγέϊ ἐδνε*. He then subjoins this remark: *Τῆς ἐγγινομένης ΣΤΙΓΜΗΣ ἐπιμαρτυροῦσης τῇ ἀρχικῇ συντάξει τῶν ἀρθρῶν*. "The point, which is inserted, shews, that the articles begin a new member in the structure of a sentence." APOLL. ALEX, de Syntaxi, l. ii. c. 12. Vide l. ii. c. 14.

certain the time when Cometas lived, we can draw no conclusion from this testimony †.

The first system of punctuation consisted in the different position of one single point. At the bottom of the letter, it was equivalent to a comma; in the middle, it was equal to a colon; and at the top, it denoted a period, or the conclusion of the sentence.*.

This scheme was easily practised in Greek manuscripts, while they were written in capitals. But when the small let-

† LEO ALLAT, de Patria Homeri, c. 5. FABRIC. Bib. Græca, l. ii. c. 2. § 21. BRUNCKII Analecta, tom. iii, p. 16, edit. 1776.

* See note †, p. 7.—Comma, puncto ad imum literæ posito, unde a Græcis ὑποσημη, a Latinis subdistinctio dicitur. Colon, puncto ad medium literæ posito, unde Græcis μεση σημη, Latinis media distinctio. Periodum, puncto ad summum literæ posito, Græcis τελεια σημη, Latinis plena et perfecta distinctio. DANES. Paralip. Orthographiæ, c. 4. DONAT p. 1742. DIOMED. de Orat. l. ii. p. 432. edit. Putschii. 1608. ISIDOR. Orig. l. i. c. 19. MICHAELIS, Lect. § 36—Some writers suppose, that the subdistinctio was equivalent to a colon. Vid. DAUSQUII Orthograph. p. 138. MONTF. Palæog. Græc. l. i. c. 4. In fact, the ancients observed no regularity in the position of their points.

ters were adopted, that is, about the ninth century †, this distinction could not be observed: a change was therefore made in the mode of punctuation.

The ancient ROMANS, as well as the Greeks, made use of points. Cicero mentions them under the appellation of *LIBRARIORUM NOTÆ*, “the marks of transcribers;” and, in several parts of his works, he speaks of “*interpunctæ clausulæ in orationibus* ;” of “*clausulæ atque interpuncta verborum* ;” of “*distincta et interpuncta intervalla* ;” of “*interpunctiones verborum, &c.*”

Seneca expressly asserts, that Latin writers, in his time, had been used to punctuation: “*Nos, cum scribimus, INTERPUNGERE consuevimus.*”

These words cannot allude to the insertion of a point after each word, as Muretus and Lipsius imagined; but must

† *Unciales literas hodierno usu dicimus eas in vetustis codicibus, quæ priscam formam servant, ac solutæ sunt, nec mutuo colligantur. Hujusmodi literæ unciales observantur in libris omnibus ad nonum usque sæculum. MONTF. Palæog. Recens. p. xii.*

* *Cic. de Orat. l. iii. § 26. Ibid. § 7. Orat. p. 10 Mutæ 13, § 25.* A 6

necessarily refer to marks of punctuation in the division of sentences. For in the passage, in which this observation occurs, Seneca is speaking of one Q. Haterius, who made no pauses in his oratorical harangues †.

Suetonius informs us, “that Valerius Probus procured copies of many old books; and employed himself in correcting, pointing, and illustrating them; devoting his time to this, and no other part of grammar *.” From which we may conclude, that, in the time of Probus, or about the year 68, Latin manuscripts had not been usually pointed; and that grammarians made it their business to supply this deficiency.

Quintilian, who wrote his celebrated treatise on oratory about the year 88, speaks of commas, colons, and periods; but it must be observed, that by these

† Sen. Epist. 40. Seneca died, A. D. 65.

* Multa exemplaria contracta emendare, ac distinguere, et adnotare curavit: soli huic nec ulli præterea, grammatices parti deditus. Suet. de Illust. Gram. c. 24. Suetonius flourished about the year aſt. Chr. 100.

terms he means clauses, members, and complete sentences, and not the marks of punctuation †.

In the fourth century ‡, Ælius Donatus published a treatise on grammar, in which he explains the *distinctio*, the *media distinctio*, and the *subdistinctio*: that is, the use of a single point, in the various positions already mentioned.

Jerom, who had been the pupil of Donatus, in his Latin version of the scriptures, made use of certain distinctions or divisions, which he calls *cola* and *commata* *.

† At illa connexa series tres habet formas: incisa quæ *χομματα* dicuntur; membra, quæ *κωλα*; et περιόδον quæ est vel ambitus, vel circumductum, vel continuatio, vel conclusio. QUINT. l. ix. c. 4.

‡ A. D. 340.

* Nemo cum prophetas versibus viderit esse descriptos, metro eos existimet apud Hebræos ligari; et aliquid simile habere de Psalmis et operibus Solomonis; sed quod in Demosthene et in Tullio solet fieri, ut per cola scribantur, et commata, qui utique prosa et non versibus conscripserunt, nos quoque utilitati legentium providentes, interpretationem novam novo scribendi genere distinximus. HIERON. Præf. in Esaiam. Vide etiam Præf. in Josuam, Paralipomena, et Ezechielem, tom. iii. p. 26, &c.—Jerom completed this work about the year 384, and died in 420.

It seems however very probable, that these divisions were not made by the addition of any points or stops; but were formed by writing, in one line, as many words as constituted a clause, equivalent to what we distinguish by a comma or a colon. These divisions were called *συχαι* or *enquad*; and had the appearance of short, irregular verses in poetry. There are some Greek manuscripts still extant, which are written in this manner †.

Diomedes, a Latin grammarian, who is supposed to have lived about the year 410, treats at large of the three distinctions mentioned by Donatus. But neither these writers, nor any of the thirty-three grammarians published by Putschius, give the least intimation of the other points now in use.

We find then, that the ancient Greeks and Romans had points, or marks of distinction, in their writings. But the transcribers usually neglected them; and only grammarians, or very accurate persons, had them inserted in their copies.

† See MONTF. Palæg. Græca, l. iii. c. 4. Ibid. l. i. c. 4.

About the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries, writers began to leave a space between the words, and to make use of commas, colons, and periods; but not with any degree of regularity. Even after the invention of printing *, the editors placed the points in an arbitrary manner, probably without bestowing on them the necessary attention. Robert Stephens, in particular varied his points in every edition of the Greek Testament †. The books printed in those days, and the small tract, which Aldus

* Separate wooden types were invented by Laurentius Coster, at Harleim, in 1430; cut metal types by Geinsfleisch, or rather by his brother Gutenberg, assisted by the liberality of John Fust or Faustus, at Mentz, in 1444. With these types, the earliest edition of the Bible was printed, in 1450. The art of casting types in matrices was invented by Peter Schoeffer, the son-in-law of Faustus, in 1452. The first book, printed with these improved types, was Durandi Rationale, in 1459. The first edition of Tully's Offices, printed by Fust and Schæffer, is dated 1465. About that time, printing began to spread itself, with great rapidity, through the principal cities of Europe.

† MICHAELIS. Lect. § 37. ROGALL. Dissert. de Auctoritate et Antiquitate Interpunctionis in Nov. Testam. The editions of the New Testament, printed by R. Stephens, appeared in 1546, 1549, 1550, 1551.

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Manutius has left us on punctuation †, will serve to convince us, that this art was in a very imperfect state, in the sixteenth century.

Montfaucon tells us, that the comma occurs in Greek manuscripts of above a thousand years antiquity ‡. Maittaire observes, that “the crooked comma was derived from the Greeks, who used it long before the Latins;” and that in some old Latin books it is not used; in others, written in the form of a small perpendicular line *.

The Greeks had no semicolon. Its present form [;] was introduced in the

† Entitled, *Interpungendi Ratio*, printed at Venice, in 1566, and subjoined to the author's *Orthographia*. Aldus Manutius was the son of Paulus Manutius, and the grandson of Aldus Manutius. They were all printers. Aldus Manutius the elder died about the year 1516; Paulus, in 1574; and Aldus the younger, in 1597.

‡ *Virgulæ, si non priscæ omnino vetustatis sunt, non tamen eas ita recentes dixeris; nam in codicibus Græcis annorum plus mille occurrunt, ad omnium minimam distinctionem positæ, et quidem forma hodiernæ ita simili, ut nihil inter sit discriminis.* MONTF. *Palæog. Græca*, l. i. c. 4. MICHAELIS, *Lect.* § 37.

* MAITTAIRE, *Eng. Grammar*, p. 200.

ninth century †, in Greek manuscripts, as a note of interrogation ; for which purpose it is still employed in Greek books. Maittaire informs us, that “ he could find no semicolon in old English books, or in Latin ones, much before the fifteenth century.”

The points, which form the colon, are taken from Latin writers ‡. In Greek, the colon is now expressed by a single point near the top of the letter ; and the period is placed at the bottom.

The modern note of interrogation was *probably* derived from that of the Greeks : that is, from the semicolon, by only changing the position of the two points ; or by placing the comma above the period in this manner [‘ ’] and giving it a little curve towards the right hand, at the bottom.

The point, which we call the note of exclamation, was not used by the Greeks ; nor has it been admitted into any addition

† MONTF. Palæog. Græca, l. i. c. 4. p. 32.
MICHAELIS, Lect. § 3.

MAITTAIRE, p. 200.

of any Greek classic, which I have observed, except Burman's Aristophanes *. in a few places. But the use of it is recommended by Dr. Burton †, in the preface to his *Pentalogia*, printed at Oxford in 1738.

* Cum notis Bergleri et Dakeri, L. But. 1760

† For the benefit of the classical reader, I shall subjoin the words of this learned writer.

“ Interea, receptam scriptionis Græcæ formam intuens, quis non in sententia decurrente accuratiores quasdam distinctionum notas desiderari sentit? ita ut membra singula propriis includantur spatiis, nec, velut indiscreta et vaga, in sedem migrent alienam? Quis nescit in utramque partem punctationum permagnam esse vim, cum oculorum præjudicia intellectum quodammodo antevertant præoccupentque? Quamobrem rei literariæ haud incommodè consulere mihi videbitur, quicumque in scriptione Græca plura quam quæ hætenus a grammaticis adhibita sunt, συνιστά instituerit. Quid enim?—e. g. quid? si το comma, quod quidem duplicem habet usum, tum respirationi subserviens, tum clausulæ minoris vim experimens, duplici nota designetur? quid? si porro admirationum, interjectionum, sententiæ abruptæ et imperfectæ propriæ apponantur notæ? et eadem denum in oratione Græca, quæ in Shakesperiana nostra, experienda editori libertas indulgeatur? Et hoc quidem, sicubi uspiam, in tragicis præcipue locum habet; ubi crebro ad aliud subita fit transitio, et colloquendum vehementia, aut elliptica dictio, aliquando etiam et aposiopesis continuæ orationis ordinem grammaticum perturbat.”

At present, all European writers make use of the following points, as marks of division, which take their name from the sentence, or the clause, which they are respectively employed to distinguish.

1. A comma ,
2. A semicolon ;
3. A colon :
4. A period .
5. An interrogation ?
6. An exclamation !
7. A parenthesis ()

To these may be added the dash—

From this short history of punctuation we may deduce the following conclusions:

First, as it appears, that the stops, in the ancient Greek and Roman classics, were not inserted in the text by the authors themselves, but have been added by subsequent grammarians or modern editors, we may infer, that the true sense of all obscure and ambiguous passages, in their works, is not to be determined by commas, colons, and periods, but by the rules of good sense and rational criticism.

Secondly, as it is very evident, that the points affect the sense of all literary compositions in the highest degree, and that even a comma may illuminate, or totally obscure, the finest passage in Homer or Virgil, we see the absolute necessity of paying a strict attention to this branch of orthography, in all new editions of the classics. Here then is a spacious field for the investigation of editors and commentators. Here they may exert their penetration, their taste, and judgment, with advantage, without being biassed, restrained, or controlled by the authority of any printed copy, or any manuscript whatever *.

* The learned editor, mentioned in the preceding note, is of this opinion. “ Porro, ut sententiæ quælibet disertius exprimantur, sentio curam haud levem in punctuationibus recte affigendis impendi oportere; utinam ab editoribus semper hac in parte cautius atque accuratius fuisset actum! Hoc enim si esset, difficultatum, quæ in sententiis passim reperiuntur, non exigua pars illico tolleretur; atque adeo dubitationum occasione omni præcisa, illa criticorum curiosa diligentia, et in verbis immutandis audacia, ut plurimum, irrita et inanis videretur. Hac certe in re, quæ est communis arbitrii atque juris, neque Cod. MSS. auctoritate sancita, leviculam hujusmodi innovationem experiri cuivis licet; neque sane ulla sententiæ labo-

These remarks may be illustrated by an obvious example. Many learned commentators and editors * of Horace have printed the following stanza, with a colon after *urna* :

Omnes eodem cogimur : omnium
Versatur urna : serius, ocius
Sors exitura, et nos in æternum
Exilium impositura cymbæ.
Lib. ii. od. 3.

This punctuation makes a false quantity in *urna* ; and should be rectified in this manner :

Omnes eodem cogimur : omnium
Versatur urna, serius, ocius
Sors exitura, & nos in æternum
Exilium impositura cymbæ.

By this small alteration of the point, the word *sors*, is united to *versatur*, as its nominative case ; and the false quantity is avoided.

ranti faciliior atque tutior afferri potest medela ; quod quidem a criticorum principe, Bentleio, sæpe feliciter effectum admiramur : atque utinam id ipsum a nobis fuisset pluribus in locis attentatum." Pentalog. Præf.

* Vid. edit. LAMBINI 1605, TORRENTII 1608. MINELLI 1706, edit. cum notis VARIORUM 1658, edit. in usum DELPHINI. &c.

An eminent fatirist has attempted, in the following couplet, to throw a ridicule on those critics, who employ themselves in rectifying the errors of punctuation ;

“ Commas and points they set exactly right,
And 'twere a sin to rob them of their mite *.”;

But this stroke of raillery can only effect those annotators, whose ideas are entirely confined to trivial circumstances, who extend their enquiries NO FARTHER than a point or a various reading, and have no taste for the more important and exquisite beauties of an elegant composition.

* POPE, Prol. to Satires.

CHAP. II.

Of PUNCTUATION.

PUNCTUATION is the art of dividing a discourse into periods, and those periods into their constituent parts; namely, a comma, a semicolon, a colon, &c.



Of a COMMA.

A Comma is a Greek word, which properly means a segment, or a part *cut off* a complete sentence. But in its more usual acceptation, it signifies the POINT, by which a period is subdivided into its least constructive parts.

In reading, it requires a small rest, or a short pause.

If we examine the structure of a compounded sentence, and consider how it is framed and connected, we shall easily discover those particular places, where it is to be divided by stops and pauses.

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- I. THREE OR MORE SUBSTANTIVES, in the same case, and in immediate succession, are separated by commas. The reason is, each word exhibits a distinct picture, which should be distinguished from the rest in writing and reading, as it is in nature.

E X A M P L E S.

THE ancients erected altars to clemency, peace, concord, fidelity, justice, mercy, piety, modesty, prudence, wisdom, honour, truth, liberty, and almost every other virtue *.

Astrologers, necromancers, magicians, conjurors, wizards, witches, gipsies, fortune-tellers, interpreters of dreams, and the like, are knaves and cheats.

Centaur, griffin, harpy, unicorn, dragon, chimera, sphinx, satyr, mermaid, siren, fairy, pigmy, are imaginary creatures.

Climate, soil, laws, customs, food, and other accidental differences, have produced an astonishing variety in the com-

* BANIER, Mythol. vol. i. p. 200.

plexion, features, manners, and faculties, of the human species *.

The verdant lawn, the shady grove, the variegated landscape, the boundless ocean, and the starry firmament, are beautiful and magnificent objects.

The ancients were not acquainted with the circulation of the blood, the weight of the air, the laws of motion, the nature of light, or the number of the planets †.

Air is necessary to the life of animals, the growth of plants, the flight of birds, the formation of sounds, and many other useful and important effects ‡.

2. TWO SUBSTANTIVES, connected by the conjunction AND, do not admit of a comma between them.

E X A M P L E S.

THE earth *and* the moon are planets.
Homer *and* Virgil were excellent poets.

* PERCIVAL, Moral Tales.—The colour of negroes is undoubtedly owing to the climate, which produces a great variety in every species of animals.

† VOLTAIRE, Letters on the English nation, xii.

‡ Travels of Cyrus, c. ii.

Painting *and* sculpture are imitations of visible objects.

Delicacy of taste is favourable to love *and* friendship.

Guard equally against arrogance *and* servility.

Religion breaths a spirit of gentleness *and* affability.

3. The foregoing rule is to be observed, where several substantives immediately follow one another in the same case; and are joined in pairs by the copulative conjunction *AND*.

EXAMPLES.

THERE is a natural difference between merit *and* demerit, virtue *and* vice, wisdom *and* folly.

Interest *and* ambition, honour *and* shame, friendship *and* enmity, gratitude *and* revenge, are the prime movers in all public transactions *.

Anarchy *and* confusion, poverty *and* distress, desolation *and* ruin, are the consequences of a civil war.

* HUME, Essay on Eloquence, vol. i,

4. Two substantives, connected by the disjunctive *OR*, may admit of a comma between them; because a disjunctive does not form so close a connection, as a copulative.

E X A M P L E S.

MOST romances are miserable rhapsodies, *or* dangerous incentives.

Milton too frequently uses technical words, *or* terms of art.

The coarsest picture will affect the mind of a peasant, *or* even a Hottentot.

5. When the latter part of the sentence is short, the comma is better omitted.

E X A M P L E S.

THE most vulgar ballads are not entirely destitute of harmony *or* nature.

The ancient actors of tragedy wore the cothurnus *or* buskin.

The comic actors wore the sock *or* sandal.

Libertines call religion bigotry *or* superstition.

6. NOUNS in APPPOSITION, that is,

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nouns added to other nouns in the same case, by way of explication or illustration, when accompanied with adjuncts, are separated from the rest of the sentence by commas.

EXAMPLES.

HOMER, the greatest poet of antiquity, is said to have been blind.

Romulus, the founder of Rome, lived 750 years before the Christian æra.

Augustus, the Roman emperor, was a patron of the polite arts.

Cupid, the god of love, was the son of Venus, the goddess of beauty.

The butterfly, child of the summer, flutters in the sun.

7. **TWO NOUNS** in APPPOSITION, not accompanied with adjuncts, the latter noun forming, as it were, part of a proper name, are not divided.

EXAMPLES.

THE emperor Antoninus wrote an excellent book*.

M Aurelius Antoninus, the philosopher, was th* adopted son of Antoninus Pius. He wrote twelve books *Τὰν εἰς ἑαυτὸν* Of moral Reflections on Things relating to himself.

Edward the Confessor was guilty of great cruelty to his mother.

Queen Christina resigned her crown in 1654.

Edward the Black Prince wore black armour.

8. Expressions in a DIRECT ADDRESS, or what is called in Latin the vocative case, are separated from the rest of the sentence by commas.

E X A M P L E S.

SIR, I am obliged to you for the favour of your admirable treatise.

I am, dear Madam, your affectionate friend.

Simulation, my Lord, is a filetto *.

Beware, Amasia, of the artful sycophant.

My son, give me thy heart †.

A note of exclamation after SIR or MADAM, at the beginning of a common

* BOLINGB, Patriot King, p. 128.

† Prov. xxiii. 26.

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letter, in which the author appears to be perfectly calm and composed, is absurd ‡.

9. A noun in what is called the case absolute *, and the participle, &c. with which it is connected, should be separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma.

E X A M P L E S.

H A R O L D being slain in the field, the Conqueror marched directly to London.

The armada being thus happily defeated, the nation resounded with shouts of joy.

Swearing does not proceed from any natural propensity, *no man* being born of a swearing constitution.

There are many sublime passages in the scriptures, *notwithstanding* their simplicity †

‡ See chap. vii.

* This case in Latin is the ablative ; in English, the nominative.

† *Notwithstanding*, though generally called a conjunction, is properly a participle, compounded of *not* and *withstanding*, and answers exactly to the Latin *non obstante*.

On PUNCTUATION. 31

10. If the case absolute occurs in the middle of a sentence, it requires a comma before and after it.

EXAMPLES.

G O D, from the mount of Sinai, whose grey top
Shall tremble, *he descending*, will himself
Ordain them laws *.

The nymph dismiss'd him, *with* od'rous garments giv'n, *to him* -
And bath'd in fragrant oils, that breath'd of heav'n†.

They feed, they quaff; and now, *after* *had* *their hunger fled*,
Sigh for their friends devour'd, and mourn the dead‡.

11. TWO ADJECTIVES, not connected by a conjunction, nor depending on each other in sense or construction, may admit of a comma between them.

* MILTON, Par. Lost, b. xii. 227.

† POPE, Odyf. v. 335.

‡ Ibid. xii. 363.

32 *On* PUNCTUATION.

EXAMPLES.

B E W A R E of a censorious, sour severity.

A proud, supercilious behaviour makes a person contemptible.

Plain, honest truth wants no artificial colouring.

Pure, un sullied virtue transcends the comprehension of the wicked.

True religion gives a native, unaffected ease to the behaviour.

12. **T W O** ADJECTIVES, immediately connected by a conjunction, are not separated by a comma.

EXAMPLES.

W I S E and good men are frequently unsuccessful.

True worth is modest and retired.

Man enjoys a fleeting and precarious existence.

Death is a persuasive and effectual teacher.

Christianity affords a bright and glorious prospect.

13. This rule is to be observed, where several adjectives are connected in pairs, either by a copulative or a disjunctive.

E X A M P L E S.

TRUTH is fair and artless, simple and sincere, uniform and consistent.

Love is eager and precipitate, active and romantic, variable and capricious*.

Friendship is cool and deliberate, sedate and temperate, steady and discreet†.

In the eclogue there must be nothing rude or vulgar, nothing finical or affected, nothing subtle or abstruse.

14. THREE OR MORE ADJECTIVES, belonging to the same substantive, without any copulatives, are separated by commas.

E X A M P L E S.

ULYSSES was a wise, eloquent, cautious, and intrepid hero.

Julius Cæsar wrote in a clear, natural, correct, flowing style.

* MONTAIGNE, vol. i. ess. 27.

† Ibid.

The Italian is a liquid, smooth, effeminate language.

Sacred history is a simple, chaste, faithful, dispassionate, impartial detail of facts.

The most innocent pleasures are the sweetest, the most sensible, the most affecting, and the most lasting.

In the first sentence a comma is admitted before the conjunction *and*; because *intrepid* is not more particularly connected with *cautious*, than with *wise* or *eloquent*.

15. An ADJECTIVE, with other words depending on it, may be separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma.

EXAMPLES.

THE book of Job is a poem, *full* of the noblest and most majestic figures.

Endeavour to possess a soul, *worthy* of your exalted station.

There is a system of opinions, *peculiar* to almost every age.

The microscope discovers millions of animalcula, *invisible* to the naked eye.

16. A COMPARISON, introduced by the adjective LIKE, and consisting of several terms, should be separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma.

EXAMPLES.

THE fire of Homer is fierce and impetuous, like a flaming vortex.

The joys of youth soon vanish, like a pleasing dream.

The generations of men glide away, like the waves of a rapid river.

Discretion, like a well-formed eye, commands a whole horizon*.

The earth, like a tender mother, nourishes her children.

17. When the comparative member is SHORT, the comma is better omitted.

EXAMPLES.

Man is cut down like a flower.

His time passeth away like a shadow.

* Spect. No 225.

36 On PUNCTUATION.

The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree *.

The mountains skipped like rams.

The hills melted like wax.

He giveth snow like wool.

He scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes.

His judgments are like the great deep †.

18. RELATIVE PRONOUNS are connective words, and generally admit a comma, or a short pause, before them.

EXAMPLES.

HE is a coxcomb, *who* values himself upon his dress.

We can hardly meet with a person, *who* humbly thinks he has too little sense.

* Ως φοινίξ. Septuag. Psal. xcii. 12. As the Greek word phenix signifies both a palm-tree, and the fabulous bird, called the phenix, some of the Fathers have absurdly imagined, that the Psalmist alludes to the latter, and, on his authority, have made the phenix an argument of a resurrection. Tertullian calls it, "plenissimum atque firmissimum hujus spei specimen." TERTULL. de Resurrectione, c. 13. CYRIL. Catech. 18. EPIPHAN. in Ancorato.

† Job xiv. 2. Psal. cxliv. 4. cxiv. 6. xcvi. 5. cxlvii. 16. xxx. 6. The scriptures are full of these beautiful similes.

On PUNCTUATION. 37

There is no charm in the female sex, *which* can supply the place of virtue.

Self-weariness is a circumstance, *which* always attends folly.

The wicked man hears voices, *which* sound only in the ears of guilt.

It is labour only, *that* gives a relish to pleasure.

Make no friendship with any one, *whose* morals are depraved.

He preaches sublimely, *whose* life is irreproachable*.

Never open your heart to persons, *whom* you do not know.

19. TWO VERBS, having the same nominative case, and immediately connected by the conjunction AND, are not separated by a comma.

EXAMPLES.

THE plain and simple style recommends and heightens the sublime †.

Good-nature mends and beautifies all objects.

* AUGUSTINUS.

† PLIN. Epist. l. iii. 13.

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The liberal arts soften and harmonize the temper.

The study of natural history expands and elevates the mind.

Religion purifies and refines the affections.

20. THREE OR MORE VERBS, having the same nominative case, and immediately following one another, are separated by commas.

EXAMPLES.

I CAME, I saw, I conquered *.

In a letter we may advise, dissuade, exhort, comfort, request, recommend, reconcile, discuss.

Exercise ferments the humours, casts them into their proper channels, throws off redundancies, and assists nature in her necessary operations †.

Virtue strengthens in adversity, mode-

* Veni, vidi, vici. The message which Julius Cæsar sent to his friend Amintius at Rome, when he conquered Pharnaces, king of Pontus. Suet. c. 37. Plut. vol. i. p. 731. edit. 1620.

† Spect. No. 115.

rates in prosperity, guides in society, entertains in solitude, advises in doubts, supports in sickness, and comforts in the hour of death.

21. SEVERAL VERBS in the infinite mode, depending on one common word, and immediately succeeding one another, are divided by commas.

EXAMPLES.

THE Spartan youth were accustomed to go barefoot, to lie on the ground, to suffer heat and cold, to live on the most ordinary provisions, to be engaged in continual exercise, and to be enured to blows and wounds *.

To relieve the indigent, to comfort the afflicted, to protect the innocent, to instruct the ignorant, to reward the deserving, is a great and godlike employment.

22. A PARTICIPLE, with a clause depending on it, is generally separated

* ROLLIN, *Anc. Hist.* vol. v.

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from the rest of the sentence by a comma.

EXAMPLES.

THE fear of death is one of the strongest passions, *implanted* in human nature.

The whole earth is but a point, *compared* to the heavens.

The planets are dark bodies, *composed* of earth and water.

The fixed stars are suns, *attended* by systems of planets.

Italy is a large peninsula, *bounded* on the north by Alps.

The sides of Vesuvius are clothed with vines, *producing* the richest wine.

One of Titian's country-pieces represents the goats, *climbing* up a hanging rock *.

Socrates had a just and piercing judgment, *joined* to the most exquisite prudence.

Virgil has given us an affecting repre-

* FENELON'S Let. to the Fr. Acad. p. 252.

sentation of Orpheus, *lamenting* his dear Eurydice †.

Æsop's Fables contain excellent instruction, *conveyed* under a pleasing disguise.

Milton compares the standard of Satan to a meteor, "*streaming* to the wind ‡."

China is one vast empire, *speaking* one language, *governed* by one law, and *sympathizing* in the same manners §.

23. THREE OR MORE ADVERBS, immediately succeeding one another, are separated by commas.

EXAMPLES.

SOME men sin frequently, deliberately, and presumptuously.

† VIRG. Georg. iv. 465.

‡ Th' imperial ensign, which, full high advanc'd.
Shone like a meteor, streaming to the wind.

MILTON, P. L. b. i. 536.

Gray's application of this magnificent image to the *beard* and *hair* of the Welch Bard is a ridiculous burlesque.

Loose his beard and hoary hair
Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled air.

§ HUMPH. ESS. on the Rise of Arts, vol. i.

We should live soberly, righteously, and piously*, in the present world.

Success generally depends on acting prudently, constantly, and vigorously, in what we undertake.

A philosopher should examine every thing coolly, impartially, accurately, and rationally.

24. SOME ADVERBS are very properly preceded by a comma.

EXAMPLES.

NEVER let your mind be absent in company, *especially* among your superiors.

You cannot conceive, *how* greatly exercise contributes to enliven the imagination †.

Chance never built the least cottage, *much less* the world.

* In the common translation, *godly*, which is an adjective, is improperly connected with the two preceding adverbs.

† Mirum est, ut animus agitatione mortuæ corporis exciteatur. PLIN. Epist. l. i. 6.

A false delicacy is affectation, *not* politeness.

True courage is exerted in repelling, *not* in offering injuries.

This world is a state of pilgrimage, *not* a place of rest.

Devotion consists in the disposition of the heart, *not* in the motion of the lips.

Establish your character on the basis of esteem, *not* on the flattery of dependants.

Guard against all the world, *particularly* against a known enemy.

To maintain order in a state, *there* must sometimes be examples of severity.

Strength and weapons cannot avail, *where* conduct and courage are wanting.

Rice acquires its greatest perfection in Asia, *where* it is the usual food of the inhabitants.

Virgil seldom rises into any remarkable sublimity, *where* he is not fired by the Iliad *.

A certain gloom and heaviness enter, *wherever* guilt resides.

Where, when, hence, whence, whither,

* Spect. No. 279.

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whenever, wherever, and other words of the same nature, may be properly called adverbial conjunctions ; because they partake of the nature both of adverbs and conjunctions : of conjunctions, as they conjoin sentences ; of adverbs, as they denote the attributes, either of time, or of place †.

25. ADVERBS of NO IMPORTANCE need not be separated from the rest of the sentence by two commas. It would be better to omit the following points.

BEAUTY, *perhaps*, depends principally on the mind.

There is, *surely*, a pleasure in beneficence.

The voice of praise, *indeed*, is sweet *.
Listen not, *however*, to the sycophant.
Flattery is, *certainly*, pernicious.

Nay, besides, moreover, again, first, secondly, thirdly, lastly, once more, above

† Hermes, b. ii. c. 2. p. 258.

* Ἠδίστον αἶψα ἐπαινος. XENOPH. apud PLIN. l. vii. ep. 32. Vide XENOPH. de Regno, where the sentiment is expressed in different words.

all, on the contrary, in the next place, in short, and all other words and phrases of the same kind, at the beginning of sentences, may be separated from the context by a comma.

26. A comma is not improperly inserted before a PREPOSITION, when the sentence is LONG ENOUGH to require a pause.

EXAMPLES.

THERE is a charm in modest diffidence, *above* the force of words.

The bees construct their cells, *according* to the nicest rules of geometry.

No author should attempt to divert his reader, *at* the expence of any man's private character.

The Deity stands unseen, *behind* the workmanship of his own hands.

The generality of men make themselves miserable, *by* desiring what is superfluous.

The ancients separated the corn from

the ear, *by* causing an ox to trample on the sheaves *.

Youth is the proper season, *for* cultivating the humane and benevolent affections.

Pride and ill-nature will be hated, *in* spite of all the wealth and greatness in the world.

We were called into existence, *in* order to receive happiness.

Modern tragedy excels that of Greece and Rome, *in* the delicacy and disposition of the fable †.

Virgil exhausts all the powers of imagination, *in* the descent of Æneas to the regions of Pluto.

The earth is but a small particle of dust, *in* the bosom of nature.

Many people gratify their eyes and ears, *instead* of their understanding.

* Deut. xxv. 4. Hom. Il. xx. 495. Varro mentions this and some other methods, in use among the Romans. De Re Rustica, lib. i. 52. The custom of employing the ox to trample on the sheaves, seems to have been a contrivance, not much wiser than that of the Irish, fastening the plough to the tails of their horses.

† Spect. No. 39.

A pleasing variety is discernible, *throughout* the whole visible creation.

Religion is a perpetual source of consolation, *under* all the calamities of life.

The sensitive plant shrinks and recedes, *upon* the least touch of one's finger.

Light is successively propagated, *with* an almost inconceivable swiftness *.

We cannot open our eyes, *without* admiring the wonderful oeconomy of the universe.

27. When the sentence is SHORT, the comma is unnecessary.

EXAMPLES.

THE planets revolve *round* the sun.

They derive their light and heat *from* his rays.

They are filled *with* proper inhabitants.

The fixed stars are suns *to* other systems.

* It is supposed, that the distance of the sun from the earth is 81,000,000 of miles ; and that a particle of light comes from thence in 8 minutes and 13 seconds ; but that a cannon ball, flying with its usual rapidity, would not pass through this amazing interval of space, in less than 25 years.

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The earth is a mere atom *in* the universe.

Innumerable worlds lie *beyond* this visible scene *.

28. When a PREPOSITION is followed by a RELATIVE PRONOUN, a comma is very properly placed before the preposition.

EXAMPLES.

MAKE no friendship with any one, *on whose* veracity you cannot depend.

It is barbarous to injure those, *from whom* we have received a kindness.

He fears no body, *of whom* no body is afraid.

You resign your liberty to the man, *to whom* you communicate your secrets.

Politeness is the art of making those people easy, *with whom* we converse.

Never do a thing, *about which* you are in doubt †.

* Beyond the solar walk, or milky way.

POPE'S ESS. on Man, i. 102.

† Quod dubitas, ne feceris. PLIN. Epist. i. 18.
Cic. de Off. p. 9.

On PUNCTUATION. 49

The scriptures contain those rules, *by which* we ought to regulate our lives.

Every evil habit is a step towards that bottomless gulph, *from which* there is no return.

Humility is the valley, *in which* virtue delights to grow.

No thought can be just, *of which* good sense is not the ground-work *.

Compassion is an emotion, *of which* you should never be ashamed.

Gravity is one of those great laws of nature, *on which* the system of the world depends.

There is not any virtue, *to which* Providence has not annexed a secret satisfaction.

Socrates rallied the fables, *upon which* the ridiculous mysteries of his age were founded.

I would not choose to see an old post pulled up, *with which* I have been long acquainted †.

The first beauty of style is propriety,

* Spect. No. 62.

† POPE to H. Bethel, Esq. let. 30.

without which all ornament is puerile and superfluous.

29. Sentences generally require a comma, or a pause, where there is a CONNECTIVE PARTICLE, or a word, introducing a NEW MEMBER, which may be separated from the preceeding part.

Conjunctions are JOINTS *, where the body of a sentence ought to be divided.

Some of the principal conjunctions are, *and, as, because, before, both, but, either, even, except, if, lest, nor, or, provided, since, so, than, that, though, till, unless, when, while, whether.*

EXAMPLES.

THE faculties of every animal are

* This metaphor is not improper: The word *colon* signifies a member, and may be compared to an arm in the human body; the comma, to a hand or a finger. Thus likewise, in ancient poetry, a metrical foot, consisting of one long and two short syllables, was called a dactyl, from the Greek word *δακτυλος* a finger; on account of the number and length of the syllables in a dactyl, corresponding with the number and length of the bones in a finger.

impaired by disuse, *and* strengthened by exercise.

Virtue is the highest proof of a superior understanding, *and* the only solid basis of greatness.

Good-nature never appears to so much advantage, *as* when it is polished by good breeding.

Meadows and rivulets have their charms, *as* well as mountains and oceans.

People are unpolite, *because* they do not know the world.

It is unreasonable to be angry with another man, *because* he is not of your opinion.

It is dangerous to indulge ourselves in jests, *because* they have generally a tincture of malignity.

A diamond must be polished, *before* it can appear to advantage.

A true philosopher preserves an evenness of mind, *both* in prosperity and adversity.

Affectation will not only destroy beauty, *but* even change it into deformity.

Virtue is not rest, *but* action.

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Religion dwells not on the tongue, *but* in the heart.

A good man will certainly be happy, *either* in this life or the next.

A sense of religion has always prevailed, *even* among savages.

There is no real use in riches, *except* in the distribution.

A diamond bears the force of the strongest fire, *except* the concentrated solar rays.

We should be ashamed of some of our best actions, *if* the world were to see our real motives.

Many endeavour to divert their thoughts, *lest* they should hear the reproaches of their own minds.

Men do not think their fortune too great, *nor* their wit too little.

Neither flatter others, *nor* permit others to flatter you.

Be not too early in the fashion, *nor* too long out of it.

We have no certain account of the founder of Rome, *or* of the time of its foundation*.

* Dissert. on the Uncert. of the Rom. Hist. part ii. c. 1.

The idle school-boy trifles over his books, *or* wastes his precious moments in play.

Conscience will preserve you from error, *provided* † you attend to its suggestions.

A man may very easily comfort himself for the wrinkles of his face, *provided* his heart be fortified with virtue.

It is almost six thousand years, *since* the earth was created.

As virtue is its own reward, *so* vice is its own punishment.

A delicacy of behaviour is more engaging, *than* elegance of dress.

Silence is sometimes more expressive, *than* the noblest eloquence.

The sentiments of Fontenelle's shepherds are better suited to the toilet of Paris, *than* to the forests of Arcadia *.

Dr. Halley has shewn, *that* one grain of gold may be cut into 10,000 visible parts ‡.

† *Provided* is properly a participle.

* HUME, Ess. on Simplicity, vol. i.

‡ KEILL'S Introd. to Nat. Phil. lect. v.

Sleep and love convinced Alexander, *that* he was not a god *.

Virtue is so amiable, *that* even the vicious admire it.

The sun is still beautiful, *though* ready to set.

The good you do is not lost, *though* disregarded by the world.

We know not what we are, *till* we have been tried.

Fire lies peaceably in flint, *till* it is excited by collision.

Devotion itself may disorder the mind, *unless* its heats are tempered with prudence †.

No tree bears fruit in autumn, *unless* it blossoms in the spring.

We generally forget our faults, *when* no body reminds us of them.

Wisdom is not ashamed to be gay, *when* it is proper.

A coquette often looses her reputation, *while* she preserves her virtue.

* Αλεξανδρος μεν γαρ απισειν εφη τοις θεον αυτον ανα-
γορευουσιν, εν τω καθευδειν μαλιστα και απροδιαζειν.
PLUTARCH de Adul. et Amici Discrim. vol. ii. p.
65. edit. 1620.

† Spect. No. 201.

The smile of gaiety is often assumed, *while* the heart aches within.

A man of sense soon perceives, *whether* his company is acceptable or not.

30. In some of the foregoing sentences, and others of a similar construction, the two constituent parts may be transposed. In this case, they are to be divided by the same point.

EXAMPLES.

IF the world were to see our real motives, we should be ashamed of some of our best actions.

Or, if the conjunction were omitted in this manner, the comma would still be necessary.

We should be ashamed of some of our best actions, were the world to see our real motives.

When no body reminds us of our faults, we generally forget them.

While a coquette preserves her virtue, she often loses her reputation.

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31. When a comparative member, introduced by the conjunction AS or THAN, is short, the comma may be omitted.

EXAMPLES.

LOVE is strong as death.
 Jealousy is cruel as the grave.
 The righteous shall shine as the stars.
 Man fleeth as a shadow.
 He fades as a leaf *.
 His days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle.
 Wisdom is more precious than rubies.
 She is more beautiful than the sun †.

Some conjunctions, when they occur in sentences, not so closely connected as the foregoing, are preceded by a semicolon.

32. A remarkable expression, or a short observation, in the form of a quotation, ought to be separated from the words,

* Οἱ περ φύλλων γενεή, τοιούδε καὶ ἀνδρῶν.

HOM. II. vi. 146.

† For these elegant comparisons, see Cantic. viii. 6. Dan. xii. 3. Job xiv. 2. Isa. lxiv. 6. Job vii. 6. Prov. iii. 15. Wisd. vii. 29.

which introduce and follow it. If the quotation be very short, or closely connected with the context, a comma will be sufficient*.

EXAMPLES.

SWIFT says, no wise man ever wished himself younger.

It hurts a man's pride to say, I do not know.

To say to a man, you lie, is a gross affront.

Plutarch calls lying, the vice of slaves†.

Plato said to Xenocrates, sacrifice to the graces‡.

GOD said, let there be light.

33. Where a verb is understood, a comma *may* be inserted.

* See chap. iii.

† Το ψευδεσθαι δουλοπρεπες. PLUT. de Lib. educand. vol. ii. p. 11.

‡ Θυεταις χαρισι. DIOG. LAERT. in Vita Xenocratis, l. iv. c. 2.

58 *On* PUNCTUATION.

EXAMPLES.

COMPLAISANCE makes friends ; truth, enemies.

To err is human ; to forgive, divine.

The aim of orators is victory ; of historians, truth ; of poets, admiration.

Peter is painted with the keys ; Paul, with a sword ; Andrew, with a cross ; James the Greater, with a pilgrim's staff and a gourd-bottle ; James the less, with a fuller's pole ; John, with a cup and a winged serpent ; Bartholomew, with a knife ; Philip, with a long staff or cross ; Thomas, with a lance ; Matthew, with a hatchet ; Matthias, with a battle-ax ; Simon, with a saw ; and Jude, with a club.

From law arises security ; from security, curiosity ; from curiosity, knowledge.

Solitude makes us love ourselves ; conversation, others.

Some place the bliss in action ; some, in ease ;
Those call it pleasure ; and contentment, these *.

* *Pope*, *ess. on Man*, iv. 21.

34. Any clause, which intervenes between the nominative case and the verb, and which may be omitted without injuring the construction, ought to be included between two commas.

E X A M P L E S.

EPICURUS, we are told, left behind him three hundred volumes of his works †.

† Diogenes Laertius says, Epicurus wrote ccc cylindri, that is, volumes rolled up in the form of a cylinder. CYLINDRUS and VOLUMEN were used by the ancients to signify a roll, including a single tract, book, or canto. Thus Ovid, speaking of the fifteen books of his *Metamorphoses*, says :

Sunt quoque mutatae ter quinque volumina formæ.

Trist. i. 1. 117.

In this view the works of Epicurus, and even the famous Alexandrian library, which, according to A. Gellius, lib. vi. 17. consisted of "almost 700,000 volumes," appears to have been more inconsiderable, than we might otherwise imagine.

Vitruvius relates a curious anecdote, which gives us no very great idea of the Ptolemean library. He informs us, that Aristophanes [Byzantinus] read, or at least attempted to read, all the books in that library, in the order in which they stood. The words of Vitruvius are, "Dixerunt esse quendam Aristophanem,

Varro, according to his own account, composed four hundred and ninety books*.

Lopez de Vega, as M. Formey asserts, composed two thousand dramatic pieces†.

Didymus, as Seneca informs us, wrote four thousand books‡.

Origen, if we may believe Epiphanius, was the author of six thousand treatises§.

Many people, like Domitian, have employed themselves in catching flies.

The mind, if not stored with useful knowledge, will become a magazine of trifles and follies.

qui summo studio, summaque diligentia, quotidie OMNES libros ex ordine perlegeret." VITRUV. in præf. ad lib. vii.—How insignificant are all modern readers, and particularly the frivolous and superficial scholars of the present age, compared with this indefatigable student! For their comfort however it may be considered, that 200 *volumina* of the ancients might not contain more than one of our folios.

* A. GELL. iii. 10.

† FORMEY on the Belles Letters, §. 15. Rapiſſay ſays, "more than 300 comedies," which is more probable. Reſpect. on Ariſt. Poet. §. 26.

‡ SENECA. Epiſt. 88.

§ EPIPHAN. Hæres. 64. p. 591. edit. 1682.

On PUNCTUATION. 61

Inattention to the business in hand, let it be what it will, is the sign of a frivolous mind.

Great conquerors, whom historians have so much extolled, have been the scourges of mankind.

Many of the Romish saints, I believe, were gross hypocrites.

The fear of want, when it becomes too violent, degenerates into avarice.

Our pity, the universal language of humanity, calls loudly upon us to relieve the distressed.

The whole chasm in nature, from a plant to a man, is filled up with various kinds of creatures.

A star, at the end of the tail of the Little Bear, is called the polar star.

This globe, which we inhabit, is but a planet.

The Julian star, in the opinion of Dr. Halley, was a comet *.

Comets, it is certain, do not presage any calamity.

* This comet appeared 44 years before Christ; afterwards in 531; again in 1106; and, lastly, in 1680. Its period is 575 years.

62 *On* PUNCTUATION.

All philosophy, which is not built up on experience, is but conjectural amusement.

The sciences, in general, open and enlarge the mind.

Astronomy, for instance, suggests the most sublime ideas.

The heavens, adorned with an innumerable multitude of stars, proclaim the glory of GOD.

35. A clause, which intervenes between the verb and the accusative or objective case, and which may be omitted without injuring the construction, ought to be included between two commas.

EXAMPLES.

COVET not, says Menander, even the thread of another man's needle *.

Avoid, as much as possible, the company of debauchees.

A man of letters never experiences, like other men, the plague of idleness.

* Μὴδε βελούτης ἐναμμε' ἐπιθυμίας. MENAND. Frag. p. 269. edit. Clerici, 1709.

Endeavour to expel, as Persius advises, the old grandmother out of your noddle†.

Homer describes, with inimitable pathos, the parting of Hector and Andromache.

36. Any member of a compounded sentence, wherever inserted, which may be omitted, without injuring the construction, may be included between two commas.

EXAMPLES.

MAN is, at present, in a state of probation.

Pain and sorrow are, more or less, the portion of all men.

We are servile, as Shakespeare expresses it, to all the skiey influences*.

Nature has wisely ordered a want of appetite, in the beginning of distempers, as a defence against their increase.

She let concealment, like a worm i'th' bud,
Feed on her damask cheek †.

† Veteres avias tibi de pulmone revelle. P. R.
Sat. v. 92.

* Measure for Measure, act. iii. sc. 11.

† Twelfth Night, act. ii. sc. 6.

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Let no wantonness of youthful spirits, no compliance with the intemperate warmth of others, ever betray you into prophane fallies.

Whatever violates nature, in any respect, cannot be innocent.

A good character shines, with an amiable lustre, through all the obscurity of a low fortune.

Fire is, as it were, the soul of the universe.

The clouds fly, as it were, upon the wings of the wind.

Olympus and Parnassus were said to reach unto heaven, that is, above the clouds.

37. Several clauses, or parenthetical expressions, between the nominative case and the verb, should be separated from the nominative case and the verb, and from one another, by commas.

EXAMPLES.

VICES, like shadows, towards the evening of life, grow great and monstrous.

Do not imagine, that the fate, either of single persons, of empires, or of the whole earth, depends on the stars.

A stream of smoke, issuing from the chimney of a retired cottage, shaded with trees, is a pleasing object*.

Strong sense, united to delicate sentiment, improved by study and observation, and free from prejudice, is necessary to form a proper judge of literary productions.

Xerxes, upon whom Fortune had lavished all her favours, not content with being master of powerful armies, numerous fleets, and inexhaustible treasures, proposed a reward to any one, who should invent a new pleasure†.

38. The insertion of ONE COMMA, and no more than one, between the nomi-

* We have this beautiful image in the *Odyssey*.

From a high point I mark'd, in distant view,
A stream of curling smoke, ascending blue;
And spiry tops, the tufted trees above,
Of Circe's palace, bosom'd in the grove.

POPE, *Odys.* x. 173.

† *Cic. Tusc. Quæst.* l. v. § 7.

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* We have this beautiful image in the *Odyſſey*.

From a high point I mark'd, in diſtant view;
A ſtream of curling ſmoke, aſcending blue;
And ſpiry tops, the tufted trees above,
Of Circe's palace, boſom'd in the grove.

POPE, *Odyſſ.* x. 173.

† *Cic. Taſc. Quaſt.* l. v. § 7.

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native case and the verb, is, in general, to be avoided, as irregular punctuation.

EXAMPLES.

H E who knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to reign †.

He who is engaged in business, pines for leisure.

Men who are insolent in prosperity, are weak and timorous in adversity.

Time which strengthens friendship, weakens love *.

The breast which is never pained, can never be pleased.

He whose desires are boundless, will always be restless.

In these sentences another comma should be inserted before the relative pronouns, *who*, *which*, *whose*; and the words between the nominative case and the verb will then form a clause, resembling a parenthesis.

† Qui nescit simulare, nescit regnare. The maxim which Lewis XI. of France recommended to his son, Charles VIII. P. ÆMYI. Hist. Franc. p. 445. edit. 1555.

* BRUYERE, C. 4.

39. A comma between the nominative case and the verb, when neither a parenthesis, nor any phrase equivalent to a parenthesis, intervenes, is improper; unless the LENGTH of the sentence should require a pause,

EXAMPLES.

THE society of ladies, is a school of politeness.

A great book, is a great evil *.

The law of nature, is the law of God,

The epic poet, is supposed to be inspired.

An ordinary reader, cannot relish what is sublime.

The arrangement of words, contributes to perspicuity.

Every part of matter, swarms with living creatures.

It would be better to omit the points in these sentences.

40. A simple sentence however, when it is a long one, and the nominative

* CALLIMACHUS apud Athenæum, lib. iii. § 1.

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case is accompanied with inseparable adjuncts, may admit of a pause immediately before the verb.

E X A M P L E S.

T H E good taste of the present age, has not allowed us to neglect the cultivation of the English language.

The navigation of the ancient Romans, was chiefly confined to the Mediterranean sea.

The severest punishment of an injury, is the consciousness of having performed a malevolent action.

The highest art of the mind of man, is to possess itself with tranquility in imminent danger *.

Whoever is capable of forgetting a benefit, is an enemy to society †.

A principal point of wisdom, is to know how to value things.

The great end of all human industry, is the attainment of happiness.

* Tatler, No 43.

† Trav. of Cyrus, p. 3.

This pause seems to be necessary, at least in speaking or reading, that the sentence may be more easily pronounced, and the complex nominative case more distinctly exhibited.

It may be observed, that a parenthetical clause is very often inserted between the nominative case and the verb; but not so frequently between the verb and the accusative or objective case. Thus we say, "Mr. Pope, in his pastorals, has imitated Virgil;" and not, "Mr. Pope has imitated, in his pastorals, Virgil." From whence we may conclude, that a comma between the nominative case and the verb, is, in many cases, the best division, which a sentence will admit.

IN almost all the foregoing rules and examples, great regard must be paid to the length of those clauses, which form a compounded sentence, and are supposed to require the insertion of a comma. When the clauses are short, and closely connected, the point may be omitted. On the contrary, a simple sentence, when it is a long one, may admit of a pause.

For nature, which never separates the agreeable from the truly useful, has annexed a pleasure to respiration, which the hearer feels, as well as the speaker.

An ingenious writer has observed, that not half the pauses are found in printing, which are heard in the pronunciation of a good reader or speaker; and that, if we would read or speak well, we must pause, upon an average, at every fifth or sixth word *.

The pauses therefore should be determined by the wants of respiration, and the laws of taste. The principal design of this chapter is to ascertain those laws, and point out those places, at which a stop may be properly and commodiously admitted.

* WALKER'S Elem. of Elocution, vol. i. p. iii.

C H A P. III.

Of a SEMICOLON,

A SEMICOLON signifies *half a member*. The point, which bears this appellation, is used for dividing a compounded sentence into two or more parts, not so closely connected, as those, which are separated by a comma; nor yet so independent on each other, as those, which are distinguished by a colon.

In reading, a semicolon requires a longer pause than a comma.

1. Some conjunctions, when they express an addition, an inference, an opposition, &c. admit of a semicolon before them. The proper point however does not depend upon any particular conjunction; but upon the degree of connection, subsisting between the adjoining clauses.

E X A M P L E S.

LET your behaviour be mild and

unassuming; *and* it will certainly be engaging.

Modesty is one of the chief ornaments of youth; *and* has always been esteemed a presage of rising merit.

Some things will not bear a strong light; *and* others require to be thrown into a shade.

Most of our pleasures are imaginary; *but* our disquietudes are real.

Straws swim upon the surface; *but* pearls lie at the bottom *.

Chaucer followed nature every where; *but* never went beyond her †.

Loquacity storms the ear; *bu* modesty gains the affections. t

His faults were the faults of a man; *but* his beauties were the beauties of an angel ‡.

A jest is not an argument; *nor* is a loud laugh a demonstration.

Christianity must certainly be the true

* Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow :
He, who would search for pearls, must dive below.
DRYDEN.

† DRYDEN, Pref. to Fables.

‡ SPENCE on Pope's *Odyssy*, Even. iii.

religion ; *otherwise* all the religions in the world are but fables.

Green is the most refreshing colour to the eye ; *therefore* Providence has made it the common dress of nature.

Satire attacks the vices of men directly ; *whereas* comedy attacks them only obliquely.

Virtue is real honour ; *whereas* all other distinctions are merely titular*.

A clownish air is but a small defect ; yet it is enough to make a man universally disagreeable.

2. The connection, which appears between the several parts of the following compounded sentences, is properly distinguished by a semicolon.

E X A M P L E S.

T H E orator makes the truth plain to his hearers ; he awakens them ; he excites them to action ; he shews them their impending danger †.

* Spect. No 286.

† FENELON, Letter to the French Academy, p. 219.

Bruyere declares, that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new ; that nature and life are pre-occupied ; and that description and sentiment have been long since exhausted *.

We may rather suppose, that nature is unlimited in her operations ; that she has inexhaustible treasures in reserve ; that knowledge will always be progressive ; that there are innumerable regions of imagination yet unexplored ; and that all future generations will continue to make discoveries, of which we have not the least idea †.

If we review the circumstances of this kingdom, we shall have the pleasure to see a people, distinguished by the favour of heaven ; a people in possession of every desirable advantage ; a country abounding in all the comforts and conveniences of life ; a happy establishment in church and state ; a profound tranquility, while the greater part of Europe is involved in war ;

* Rambler, No. 143. BRUYERE, ch. i.

† Rerum Natura sacra sua non simul tradit. Initiatos nos credimus ; in vestibulo ejus hæremus. SEN. Nat. Quæst. l. vii. c. 31.

a general harmony and unanimity in the nation ; an amiable and exemplary sovereign ; a judicious and active administration ; the arts and sciences in their glory ; armies, which have been remarkably triumphant ; and a royal navy, which has gained immortal honour, and extended our conquests and our commerce to every quarter of the globe *.

3. When several detached phrases succeed one another, each forming a complete sense, they are properly distinguished by a PERIOD. Nevertheless, when they are short ; when they have a slight connection ; when they are subordinate parts of one general proposition ; or seem to be only thrown

Multum adhuc restat operis, multumque restabit ;
nec ulli nato post mille sæcula præcludetur occasio,
aliquid adhuc adjiciendi. Id. Epist. 64.

Veritas nondum est occupata : multum ex illa etiam
futuris relictum est. Id. Epist. 33.

Veniet tempus, quo ista, quæ nunc latent, in lucem
dies extrahat, et longioris ævi diligentia . . . Veniet
tempus, quo posteri tam aperta nos nescisse mirentur.
Id. Nat. Quæst. l. vii. c. 25.

* Sermon on the General Fast, 1761, by Mr. ROBERTSON.

promiscuously into one group, the exact pointing may be neglected or diminished, and the semicolon used instead of the period.

E X A M P L E S.

T H E pride of wealth is contemptible; the pride of learning is pitiable; the pride of dignity and rank is ridiculous; but the pride of bigotry is insupportable *.

Listen to the affectionate counsels of your parents; treasure up their precepts; respect their riper judgments; and endeavour to merit the approbation of the wise and good †.

The epic poem creates admiration; tragedy forces tears from us; comedy makes us laugh; and pastoral produces gentle and pleasing sensations ‡.

* PERCIVAL, Moral Tales.

† PERCIVAL, Moral Tales.

‡ FORMEY on the Belles Letters, § 5.

C H A P. IV.

Of a c o l o n.

THIS word in Greek signifies a *member*, or a large division of a period. It is used when the preceeding part of the sentence is complete in its construction ; but is followed by some additional remark or illustration, naturally arising from the foregoing member, and immediately depending on it in sense, though not in syntax.

E X A M P L E S.

THE well-bred man desires only to please : the coxcomb wishes to shine.

Do not flatter yourself with the idea of perfect happiness : there is no such thing in the world.

An ordinary reader does not relish what is sublime : it does not affect him.

Nothing is made in vain : every thing has its use.

He was one of the noblest works of GOD : he was an honest man.

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Only good and wise men can be friends :
others are but companions.

Rebuke thy son in private : public re-
proof hardens the heart.

Study to acquire a habit of thinking :
no study is more important.

The path of truth is a plain and safe
path : that of falsehood is a perplexing
maze.

No man should be too positive : the
wisest are often deceived.

An idle man is a monster in the crea-
tion : every thing around him is active.

Virtue is too lovely to be concealed
in a cell : the world is her scene of action.

Time is not the only master of expe-
rience : books instruct.

Admiration is commonly the effect of
gross ignorance : great admirers are gene-
rally great fools.

2. The colon seems to be used with pro-
priety, where a CONJUNCTION is not
expressed, but UNDERSTOOD. A
conjunction, in the middle of the fore-
going sentences, would form a closer
connection, and require a semicolon.
For instance :

THE well-bred man desires only to please ; *but* the coxcomb wishes to shine.

Do not flatter yourself with the idea of perfect happiness ; *for* there is no such thing in the world.

An ordinary reader does not relish what is sublime ; *because* it does not affect him.

3. Two or three colons are used by some writers in one sentence.

EXAMPLES.

WERE all books reduced to their quintessence, many a bulky author would make his appearance in a penny paper : there would be scarce any such thing in nature as a folio : the works of an age would be contained on a few shelves ; not to mention millions of volumes, that would be utterly annihilated *.

This punctuation seems to be inaccurate. The second and third clauses are *intimately connected* with the first, and require only two semicolons. The fourth

* ADDISON, Spect. No 124.

alone is an additional clause, naturally arising from the former ; but not absolutely depending in syntax on any preceding member. The only place therefore, where a colon ought to be admitted, is after the word *shelves*.

It may be presumed, in general, that one colon in a period is sufficient ; as two supplimental clauses, equally independent on the foregoing part, and on each other, can scarcely ever occur.

4. A colon is commonly used when an example, a quotation, or a speech is introduced, in this manner :

E V E is thus beautifully described by Milton :

“Grace was in all her steps.”

Always remember this ancient maxim :
KNOW THYSELF *.

The saying of Pythagoras contains the most excellent advice : REVERENCE THYSELF †.

* Γνωθι σεαυτον, Nosce teipsum. DIOC. LAERT. in Vita Thaletis. JUV. Sat. xi. 27.

† Παντων δε μαλιστα αισχυνει σαυτον. PYTHAG. Aur. Carim. v. 12.

The scriptures give us an amiable representation of the Deity in these words: GOD IS LOVE.

Providence has stamped every possession of man with this inscription: REJOICE WITH TREMBLING.

5. It is observable, that every verse in the Psalms, the Te Deum, and other Parts of the Liturgy, is divided by a colon.

EXAMPLES.

MY tongue is the pen : of a ready writer. Let every thing that hath breath : praise the Lord *.

The noble army of martyrs : praise thee.

The Father : of an infinite majesty,

This point is calculated for choirs, where such parts of the service are chanted; and only serves to divide the chant into two parts. Though we are told, that the Psalms are "pointed, as they are to be sung or *said* in churches," the colon is not to be regarded in *reading* them, unless it happens to be placed in conformity to the rules of punctuation.

* Psal. xlv. 2. cl. 6.

C H A P. V.

Of a P E R I O D.

A PERIOD properly signifies a circuit, or a sentence, in which the meaning is suspended, till the whole is finished. It is called by Cicero, "verborum ambitus *." The Greek and Latin writers, who were at liberty to throw the first word in construction to the end of the sentence, could easily form a period of this nature; but modern languages do not so readily admit of such a circuitous

* *Comprehensio et ambitus verborum.* Cic. de Clar. Orat. § 66.—In toto circuitu illo verborum, quem Græci *περίοδος*, nos tum ambitum, tum circuitum, tum comprehensionem, aut continuationem, aut circumscriptionem, dicimus. Cic. Orator, § 41.

According to this idea, the following sentence is a regular period: "At last, after much fatigue, through deep roads, and in bad weather, we came, with no small difficulty, to our journey's end."

By a different arrangement these words form what is called a loose or disjointed sentence, thus: "We came to our journey's end, at last, with no small difficulty, after much fatigue, through deep roads, and in bad weather."

arrangement. In English, a sentence of any sort, which is complete in itself, or independent on every other, is called a period; and the point, distinguished by that name, is always placed at the conclusion.

In reading, a period requires a full stop, that is, a complete pause, or a perfect interval of silence.

1. If two sentences come together, and have no connection, either in sense or construction, notwithstanding their brevity, they ought to be considered as two separate periods, and divided by a full stop.

EXAMPLES.

F E A R God. Honour the king.

In the latter sentence there are no less than five words, namely, end, last, difficulty, fatigue, roads, with any of which the sentence might have been terminated. CAMPBELL'S Phil. of Rhet. b. iii. c.

3 § 3. P. 341.

Demetrius Phalereus compares a loose sentence to a heap of stones; and a regular period to an arch. in which the stones have a dependence on one another.

De Elocut. § 13.

Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing*.

2. A period may be admitted between two sentences, which are joined by a disjunctive or a copulative conjunction; provided the construction of the latter sentence does not immediately depend on the former.

Several chapters in the New Testament begin with *but, for, wherefore, therefore, and, &c.* For instance:

BUT a certain man, &c. Acts, ch. v.
For the kingdom of heaven, &c. Mat. xx.
Therefore thou art inexcusable, &c. Rom. ii.

Wherefore, when we could no longer forbear, &c. 1 Thes. iii.

And unto the Angel, &c. Rev. iii.

It is remarkable, that nineteen chapters in the Revelations begin with AND.

By these examples it appears, that the foregoing conjunctions are used, when there is a remote, as well as when there is a close and intimate union between two sentences in a discourse; and

* 1 Pet. ii. 17. 1 Thes. v. 16, 17.—See chap. iii. § 3.

that the quality of the point does not depend on the connective particle, but on the structure of the two sentences.

3. Any point except a period, after an abbreviated word, is improper.

EXAMPLES.

Mad^m, Esq; Feb:

These words should be abbreviated in this manner:

Mad^m Esq. Feb.

It is better however not to abbreviate the word *Madam*; or any other word, in which the abbreviation saves the trouble of writing only one or two letters.

The custom of placing a semicolon after the q, in the abbreviation of Esquire, is ridiculously derived from this circumstance. In manuscripts, the word was generally abbreviated with a flourish after that letter, resembling the figure of three (3). The printers sometimes represented this flourish by a proper character; but very often, for want of the type, substituted a semicolon. Such words as *neque*, *atque*, *quoque*, are abbreviated both ways

in the old editions of the classics. Thus, the flourish and the semicolon are used promiscuously, in an edition of Horace, printed at Cologne, in the year 1589. But as these characters, especially the semicolon, are so manifestly absurd, either in Latin or English abbreviations, they should be entirely exploded. The ancient, simple, and rational mode of abbreviating the enclitical particle *que*, &c. was, by adding a dot or period: as, POSTERISQ. EORUM *. FINISQ. AB ORIGINE †.

* GRUT. p. 591.

† REINES. p. 675.

C H A P. VI.

Of an INTERROGATION.

A NOTE of interrogation is used at the end of an interrogative sentence ; that is, when a question is asked.

In reading, an interrogation generally requires a longer stop than a period ; because an answer is either returned or implied ; and consequently a proper interval of silence is necessary.

- 1, The following series of questions requires, at each division, a note of interrogation.

H O W thrive your garden-plants ?
how look the trees ? how spring the brocoli and the finocchio ? how did the poppies bloom ? and how is the great room approved ? What parties have you had of pleasure ? what in the grotto ? what upon the Thames *?

Why is a magnificent palace preferred to a cleanly cottage ? a piece of painting, to an ordinary sign-post ? a suit of em-

* Mr. Digby to Mr. Pope, Let. 14.

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broidery to a covering of frize ? a service of plate, to a set of earthen dishes ? a numerous attendance, to a dumb-waiter ? a concert of music, to a set of rustic scrappers ? an opera, to a village wake *.

2. Questions, which a person asks himself in contemplation, ought to be terminated by points of interrogation.

E X A M P L E S.

W H A T power built over our heads this magnificent arch † ? Who adorned the heavens with such exquisite beauty ? Who painted the clouds with inimitable colours ? At whose voice do the planets perform their constant revolutions ? Who guides the comets through the remote regions of the universe ? Who atrayed the sun with transcendent glory ? What hand has lighted that astonishing flame ?

* Philemon to Hydaspes, Conv. 2.

† There is, philosophically speaking, no arch over our heads. The sky has only that appearance, because the sight is lost on all sides, at equal distances, in the depth of unbounded space.

3. A point of interrogation is improper after sentences, which are not QUESTIONS, but only expressions of ADMIRATION, or some other emotion.

EXAMPLES.

HOW many instances have we of chastity in the fair sex * ?

How finely has the son of Sirach described the art of gaining friends ?

With what prudence does he caution us in the choice of our companions ?

With what strokes of nature has he described the behaviour of a treacherous friend † ?

4. The generality of writers use a note of interrogation, when they only inform us, that a question has been asked, and do not employ the very words, which form the question.

YOUR father inquired, when I had heard from Madras ?

Your sister asked me, when I thought you would be in town ?

* Spect. No 73.

† Ibid. No 68.

The Cyprians asked me, why I wept?
I asked him, wherein the authority of
the king consisted?

Question. Whether anger ought to be
suppressed entirely, or only to be confined
within the bounds of moderation *?

Ask your learned friend, why the Greeks
joined a verb of the singular number, to
a plural noun of the neuter gender?

5. The foregoing sentences are not inter-
rogative, and therefore should be ter-
minated by a period. To give them
the interrogative form, they should be
expressed in this manner:

YOUR father said to me, When
have you heard from Madras?

When, said your sister, do you think
my brother will be in town?

The Cyprians said to me, Why do you
weep?

I proposed this question to him:
Wherein does the authority of the king
consist?

Question. Whether ought anger to

* ENFIELD'S Speaker, b. iv. c. 1.

be suppressed entirely, or only confined within the bounds of moderation * ?

Desire your learned friend to answer this question : Why did the Greeks join a verb of the singular number to a plural noun of the neuter gender ?

In this form the foregoing sentences are direct questions, and require a point of interrogation after them.

6. Though the former mode of expression is more usual, and perhaps more easy and familiar, it is very observable, that the latter is the form, constantly employed by the sacred writers.

E X A M P L E S.

T H I S is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, who art thou ? And he confessed, and denied not ; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then ? Art thou Elias ?

* See LOWTH's Grammar, p. 144. edit. 1783, where a very proper distinction is made between explicative, or declarative, and interrogative sentences.

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And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No *.

This is an idiom of the oriental style, and seems to give us a more lively and animated representation, than our ordinary method of relating the substance of a conversation in the third person.

* John i. 19, 20, 31.

C H A P. VII.

Of an EXCLAMATION.

“**E**XCLAMATION is the voice of nature, when she is agitated, amazed, or transported.

“In reading, it requires an elevation of the voice, as the term exclamation implies ; and such a pause, as may seem to give room for a momentary reflection *.”

In the higher poetry, in which all the sentiments and passions of the human mind are usually described with energy and pathos, a point of exclamation is not improperly used after words or sentences, which express any kind of emotion.

1. A note of exclamation after an address, a gratulation, invocation, supplication, &c.

O STAY ! oh pride of Greece ! Ulysses, stay !
O cease thy course, and listen to our lay † !

Hail, Dian, hail !—The huntress of the groves
So shines majestic, and so stately moves ‡.

* Introd. to the study of polite Literature.

† POPE, *Odyss.* xii. 222.

‡ *Ibid.* vi. 179

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Come, ever welcome, and thy succour lend!

Oh, ev'ry sacred name in one—my friend *!

O Jove supreme! whom men and gods revere!

And thou, whose lustre glids the rolling sphere †.

Oh! let soft pity touch thy gen'rous mind ‡.

2. Expressions of joy, transport, love, admiration, &c.

LIGHT of my eyes! he comes! unhop'd for joy §.

I am thy father.—O my son! my son ||.

Oh dearest, most rever'd of womankind ¶!

What winning graces! what majestic mien!

She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen **!

3. Expressions denoting pity or anxiety, an ardent wish, or a pathetic farewell.

A L A S, poor ghost ††!

Too daring prince! ah, whither dost thou run!

Ah, too forgetful of thy wife and son ‡‡!

Oh! had we both our humble state maintain'd,

And safe in peace and poverty remain'd §§!

Farewell! and ever joyful may'st thou be,

Nor break the transport with one thought of me!

But ah, Ulysses |||! ———

* Ibid. xvii. 225.

† Ibid. xvii. 148.

‡ Ibid. vi. 212.

§ Ibid. xvii. 52.

|| Ibid.

xvi. 206.

¶ Ibid. xvii. 56.

** POPE,

Il. iii. 207.

†† Hamlet, i. 8.

‡‡ POPE,

Il. vi. 510.

§§ PITT, Æn. iii. 832.

||| POPE,

Odyf. v. 261.

4. Terror, lamentation, despair.

ANGELS and ministers of grace defend us * !
 Alas ! what hospitable land, he cry'd,
 Or oh ! what seas a wand'ring wretch will hide † !
 So farewell hope ! and with hope, farewell fear !
 Farewell remorse ‡ !

5. Contempt, abhorrence, indignation,
 threatning, imprecation.

OMONSTER ! mix'd of insolence and fear !
 Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a deer § !
 O alienate from God ! O spirit accurst !
 Forsaken of all good || !
 O void of faith ! of all bad men the worst !
 Renown'd for wisdom, by th' abuse accurst ¶ !
 Hence to thy fellows !—dreadful she began,
 Go, be a beast ** !
 Arise, black vengeance, from th' unhallow'd cell †† !

6. Vociferation.

A HORSE ! a horse ! my kingdom for a horse ††† !

* Hamlet, i. 7. † PITT, Æn. ii. 90. ‡ Par.
 Lost, iv. 108. § POPE, Il. i. 297. ¶ Par.
 Lost. v. 877. ¶ POPE, Odyf. xvi. 43. ** Ibid.
 x. 381. †† Othello, iii. 8. SHAKES. Rich.
 III. act v. sc. 8.

96 *On* PUNCTUATION.

To arms ! to arms ! the fierce virago cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies †.

Restore the lock ! she cries ; and all around,
Restore the lock ! the vaulted roofs rebound ‡.

————— I fled, and cry'd out, DEATH !
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back rebounded, DEATH § !

In prose, the passions are not delineated with the same force and animation, as they are in poetry ; and consequently, the note of exclamation is not so frequently introduced. Yet still the same sentiments and emotions, wherever they occur, require the same punctuation.

The difference between an interrogative and an exclamatory sentence is, in some cases, almost imperceptible. The following is perhaps the only line, which can be drawn between them.

7. A sentence, in which any wonder or admiration is expressed, and no ANSWER either EXPECTED or IMPLIED, is properly terminated by a note of exclamation.

† Rape of the Lock, cant. v. 37.
v. 103.

§ Par. Lost, ii. 787.

‡ Ib. cant.

On PUNCTUATION. 97

EXAMPLES.

HOW ridiculous are the cares of men !

How much vanity in their pursuits * !

With what fury do they worry one another !

How mischievous are the effects of war !

How many are enchanted with an idle popularity !

But how pleasing is true glory !

What is more amiable than virtue !

What a lesson of benevolence does Christianity inculcate !

Who can express the noble acts of the LORD † !

What must GOD himself be, when his works are so magnificent !

8. A note of exclamation may be placed after SIR or MADAM, when any sudden or violent emotion is expressed,

EXAMPLES.

SIR ! this language amazes me !

* O curas hominum ! o quantum est in rebus inane !

PRAT. SAT. p. 4.

† Psal. cvi. 2.

98 *On* PUNCTUATION.

Madam ! I am thunderstruck !

All the various passions of the human mind, tenderness, love, respect, anger, disdain, &c. may be indicated by the tone of the voice, with which these two words are pronounced.

9. It may be asked : What pause is proper after an ironical expression ?

In answer to this enquiry, it must be observed, that there are two sorts of irony, the grave and the exclamatory. The former may be terminated by a period ; the latter, by a note of exclamation.

EXAMPLES.

FLORIO was a delicate youth, something like Milo, who carried a bull on his shoulders, knocked him down with his fist, and then eat him for his breakfast *.

O excellent guardian of the sheep !—
wolf !

* De quo [Milone] hoc proditur, quod istu nudæ manus taurum fecit victimam ; eumque solidum, quam mactaverat die absumpsit solus, non gravatus. Super hoc NIHIL DUBIUM. Solin. c. 4. Athen. Deipnos l. x.

—————Fair patrimony
That I must leave you, sons *!

Some writers have asserted †, but, I believe, without foundation, that the Germans make an ironical expression by inverting the note of exclamation thus :

W H A T an admirable poet ;
What an exquisite musician ;

We have no such mark of distinction ; because perhaps it may be supposed, that the character of the person commended, the air of contempt, which appears in the writer, and the extravagance of the compliment, will sufficiently discover the irony, without any particular notation ‡. However, what the celebrated Le Clerc has suggested upon this subject deserves consideration. It is his opinion, that, unless a more proper mark could be invented, an ironical expression ought to

* Par. Lost, x. 818.

† GREENWOOD'S Eng. Gram. part iii. c. 5.
MANSON'S Grammar.

‡ Ironia, says Quintilian, aut pronunciatione intelligitur, aut persona, aut rei natura. Lib. viii. c. 6.

be distinguished by a note of exclamation. He accordingly recommends this point in several passages in the *Æneid*. The classical reader shall have the sentiments of this learned writer in his own words ;

“ In Ironia idem signum (nisi quis mallet novum inveniri, quod in ceteris etiam adfectibus exprimendis fieri posset) rectius adponeretur, quam omitteretur. Sic *Æneid*, i. 39. ubi Junonis, ira æstuantis, animus describitur :

—Mene incepto desistere victam ?

Nec posse Italia Teucrorum avertere regem ?

Quippe veter fatia !

“ Malim post *fatis* signum Ironiæ addere, quam lectori rem intelligendam relinquere, cum multi non intelligant, quæ de re dixi, p. ii. sect. i. c. 16. § 24. Similiter paullo post, versu 49.

—Et quisquam numen Junonis adoret

Præterea, aut supplex aris imponant honorem !

“ Præstat signum Ironicæ exclamationis, ejusque indignatione mistæ, addere, quam interrogationis, quæ hic nulla est. Idem factum velim, post versum 95, *Æneidos* iv.

Egregiam vero laudem, et spolia ampla, refertis! T
Tuque puerque tuus; magnum et memorabile nomen,
Una dolo diuini, si semina victa duorum est!

“Non sum nescius ex re ipsa satis
liquere, esse hic ironiam; sed nihil vetat
signo hoc quoque indicari; et sunt loca,
ut diximus, ubi omnes figuram non vi-
dent*.”

With respect to these and other similar
passages, which may be occasionally in-
troduced, the observations of this excel-
lent author are certainly just. But as it
would be absurd to use a note of excla-
mation, instead of a period, at the end of
every sentence, throughout a long ironi-
cal discourse, this point should not always
accompany an irony, as its distinguishing
characteristic.

On this occasion, it may not be impro-
per to caution the young and unexperi-
enced writer against the immoderate use
of exclamations. Whenever we see a
page in prose, profusely interspersed with
points of admiration, we generally find
it full of unnatural reveries, rant, and
bombast.

* CLER. Art. Crit: p. iii. sect. 1. c. 11. § 19.

The sacred writings, and particularly the Psalms, abound with expressions of the warmest piety, and the most elevated descriptions of the divine nature. On these sublime subjects, fanatics and enthusiasts would have used many rapturous exclamations. But our translators, in conformity to the sober majesty of the original, have seldom introduced the note of admiration. And in this particular they deserve applause ; because the rational and manly genius of true religion does not consist in exclamations, flights, and ecstasies ; but in calmness and composure, in energy of thought, and the plain, unaffected language of sincerity and truth.

C H A P. VIII.

Of a PARENTHESIS.

A PARENTHESIS [from *παρενιδημι*, interpono sive obiter infero] is a clause, containing some necessary information, or useful remark, introduced into the middle of a sentence obliquely, which may be omitted, without injuring the construction.

On some occasions a parenthesis may have a spirited appearance, as prompted by a certain vivacity of thought, which can glance happily aside, as it is going along. But, in general, they have a disagreeable effect, being a sort of wheels within wheels, sentences in the midst of sentences, a perplexed method of disposing of some thought, which the writer has not the art to introduce in its proper place*.

Elegant writers will endeavour to avoid the frequent use of parentheses.

In reading or speaking, a parenthesis

* BLAIR, Lect. xi. p. 222.

requires a moderate depression of the voice, and a quicker pronunciation, with a pause something longer than a comma.

1. If the incidental clause be short, or perfectly coincide with the rest of the sentence, it is not necessary to use the parenthetical characters, but only to enclose it by two commas.

EXAMPLES.

THE sun, says Anaxagoras, is a red-hot iron *.

The sun, according to some ancient philosophers, quenches his flames in the ocean †.

* ΟΥΤΟΣ ΕΛΕΓΕ ΤΩΝ ΗΛΙΩΝ ΜΥΘΟΝ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΔΙΑΚΥΡΟΝ, ΚΑΙ ΜΕΛΩ ΤΗΣ ΠΕΡΙΟΧΩΝΗΣΟΥ. *DIOC. LAERT.* l. ii. c. 3.
The author of *Hudibras* alludes to this passage in the following lines :

For Anaxagoras long ago
Saw hills, as well as you, i' th' moon ;
And held the sun was but a piece
Of red-hot iron, as big as Greece.

Canto iii.

† *STRABO*, l. iii. p. 138. edit. 1620. *Milton* says poetically,

The sun
Sups with the ocean.

Par. Lost, v. 426.

The ancients, for want of telescopes, formed many absurd notions of the heavenly bodies.

The sun, as modern astronomers have demonstrated, is placed in the centre of our system.

Every planet, as the Creator has made nothing in vain, is most probably inhabited.

Every star, if we may judge by analogy, is a sun to a system of planets.

2. The parenthetical characters are frequently used, where they seem to be unnecessary.

E X A M P L E S.

J E S U S saw two brethren, casting a net into the sea : (for they were fishers.)

Insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect.

He found them asleep again ; (for their eyes were heavy :) neither knew they what to answer him,

They led him unto the brow of the hill (whereon their city was built) that they might cast him down headlong.

Then came to him certain of the Sadducees (which deny there is any resurrection) and they asked him.

The servants and officers had made a fire of coals ; (for it was cold :) and they warmed themselves.

Put on therefore (as the elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercies.

Raise up (we pray thee) thy power *.

Innumerable as the stars of night,
Or (stars of morning) dew-drops †.

—————By his side
(As in a glist'ring zodiac) hung the sword ‡.
Now length of fame (our second life) is lost §.
But when (by wisdom won) proud Ilion burn'd ||.
Speak you (who saw) his wonders in the war ¶.

In these and other similar passages, the common points would be sufficient. Aldus Manutius says very properly: "Unum

* Mat. iv. 18. Com. Prayer, Baskerv. edit, 1763.
Mat. xxiv. 24. Mar. xiv. 40. Luke iv. 29. Luke
xx. 27. John xviii. 18. Colos. iii. 12. Com. Prayer,
Baskerv. edit. Collect 4 Sund. in Advent, Baskerv.

† Par. Lost, v. 745.
§ Pope, Ess. on Crit. 480.
|| Ibid. 159.

‡ Ibid. xi. 246.
¶ Pope, Odyss.

¶ Ibid. iv. 334.

hoc tacere non possum, inepte facere, qui hæc parenthesi includunt: *ut puto, ut res indicat, ut a majoribus accepimus, quod equidem facile intellexerim*, et similia; quæ si semicirculo distinguantur, aut saltem puncto et semicirculo, satis erit *."

3. When the intervening clause is a deviation from the general tenor of the sentence, and particularly when it consists of many terms, it may be inclosed as a parenthesis.

EXAMPLES.

NATURAL historians observe (for whilst I am in the country, I must fetch my illusions from thence) that only the male birds have voices †.

Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said (the number of the names together were [was] about an hundred and twenty) Men and brethren ‡.

Hear ye my defence, which I make

* Interpungendi Ratio, p. 5.

† Spect. No 128.

‡ Acts i. 15.

now unto you. (And when they heard, that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence, and he saith) I am verily a man, which am a Jew*.

DIGRESSIONS in the New Testament, which interrupt the course of the narrative, are generally distinguished by the parenthetical characters. See Mat. i. 22, 23. ix. 20, 21, 22. Rom. ii. 13, 14, 15. &c.

4. When the incidental sentence is not only introduced obliquely, but happens to be interrogatory or exclamatory, and, in that respect, different from the context, the parenthetical marks seem to be necessary, and to have a considerable use in directing the eye and the voice of the unexperienced reader.

Some infernal spirit, seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought ?) escap'd
The bars of hell †.

The harmony
(What could it less, when spirits immortal sing ?)
Suspended hell ‡.

* Acts xxii. 1, 2, 3.

† Par. Lost. iv. 793.

‡ Par. Lost. ii. 552 .

—————Which they not obeying,
Incurr'd (what could they less ?) the penalty *.

And was the ransom paid ? It was ; and paid
(What can exalt his bounty more ?) for you †.

To gain a posthumous reputation, is
to save four or five letters (for what is a
name besides ?) from oblivion.

More lovely than Pandora, whom the gods
Endow'd with all their gifts (and O, too like
In sad event !) when to th' unwiser son
Of Japhet, brought by Hermes, she ensnar'd
Mankind ‡.

And to our seed (O hapless seed !) deriv'd §.

And whirl us (happy riddance !) from ourselves ||.

Consider (and may the consideration
sink into your hearts !) the fatal conse-
quences of a wicked life.

King James wrote a treatise (what
could be more ridiculous !) on the HEI-
NOUS SIN of using tobacco ¶.

* Par. Lost, x. 14. † YOUNG, Night Thoughts, 4.

‡ MILTON, Par. Lost, iv. 714. § Ib. x. 965.

|| YOUNG, Night Thoughts, 2.

¶ Entitled, "A Counterblaste to Tobacco." The
royal pedant represents those, who use tobacco, as

Haud procul inde, citæ Metium in diversa quadrigæ
Distulerant (at tu dictis, Albane, maneres!)
Raptabatque viri mendacis viscera Tullus †.

Quintilian observes, that there are both a parenthesis and apostrophe in these lines ‡.

5. The parenthetical marks are sometimes necessary to prevent **CONFUSION**, or an **AMBIGUITY** in the construction of a sentence.

EXAMPLES.

WHOSOEVER eateth leavened bread (that soul shall be cut off from Israel) from the first day until the seventh day §.

guilty of "great vanitie and uncleannesse, of sinfull and shamefull lust;" and concludes his invective in these terms: "It is a custome loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmfull to the braine, dangerous to the lungs; and in the black stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible stygian smoake of the pit that is bottomlesse." King JAMES's Works, p. 222.

† *Æn.* viii. 642. Vide *CLERIC. Art. Crit.* p. iii. s. i. c. ii. § 18.

‡ *QUINTIL.* ix. 3.

§ *Exod.* xii. 15. This transposition is in the Hebrew text, and in the Septuagint; but is rectified in our translation.

They sought to lay hold on him (but they feared the people) for they knew, that he had spoken the parable against them *.

They said, who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre ? (and when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away) for it was very great †.

I say unto you, that Elias is indeed come (and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed) as it is written of him ‡.

This man purchased a field, with the

* Mar. xii. 12.

† Mar. xvi. 3, 4. In the Cambridge MS, the last clause, "for it was very great," immediately follows the question, as the sense requires.

‡ Mar. ix. 13. This parenthesis seems to be necessary, as the prophets do not any where foretell the ill-treatment, which John the Baptist received from Herod and the Jews. Some writers, especially Whiston, in vindication of their own mistaken interpretation, rashly imagine, that the passage in Malachi, ch. iv. 5, 6. which is here alluded to by the evangelist, has been mutilated by the Jews. Vide WOLLII Comment. Philolog. de Parenthesi sacra, p. 127. Lips. 1726. WHIST. Ess. towards restor. the true Text of the O. T. p. 105.

reward of iniquity ; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. (And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem, inso-much as that field is called in their proper tongue Aceldama, that is to say, the field of blood.) For it is written in the book of Psalms *.

6. Some writers on punctuation maintain, that the parenthetical marks should be accompanied with every point, which the sense would require, if the parenthesis were omitted. But the comma, if not the semicolon and the colon, is superfluous ; because the pause, which is necessarily made at the beginning and the end of the parenthesis, while

* Acts. i. 18, 19, 20. The nineteenth verse is an observation, inserted by the historian. Peter would not have called the language of Jerusalem, "*their* proper tongue," when he himself spoke the same dialect. Nor would he have explained the word "Aceldama" to the disciples, who must have known the meaning of it, as well as himself. But it was natural for the evangelist, who was a native of Antioch, and wrote for the information of the Christian world in general, to throw in these circumstantial observations. Vide CIERIC. Art. Crit. p. iii. f. i. c. 11.

the reader or the speaker is giving his voice a different modulation, is at least, equal in time to a comma, and is sufficiently marked by the parenthetical characters, without the addition of that point *. In this case, the comma is indeed frequently and very properly omitted in books, which, in general, are accurately printed.

EXAMPLES.

JUDAS saith unto him (not Iscariot) Lord, how is it, that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world †?

Nicodemus saith unto him (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him ‡?

Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the

* Ipsa enim parenthesis est interpunctio. VERNEIUS de Orthog. Latina. Romæ, 1747.

† John xiv. 22.

‡ John vii. 50.

law hath dominion over a man, as long as he liveth * ?

Know then this truth (enough for man to know)
 " Virtue alone is happiness below †."

This prophetic discernment not only presents them the barren prospect of futurity (a prospect not hid from the meanest of men) but shews those events, which are likely to attend it ‡.

Many of the foregoing parentheses, and others of a similar construction, embarrass the periods, in which they occur; are utterly inconsistent with accuracy and elegance of style; and should be carefully avoided.

* Rom. vii. 1.—ο νεμωσ—εφ' οσον χρονον ζη. The law, as long as it lives, subsists, or is in force.

† Essay on Man, b. iv. 309.

‡ HARRIS, Hermes, b. i. c. 7. p. 151.

C H A P. IX.

*Of a DASH, or a short horizontal line,
in writing.*

THE dash is frequently used by hasty and incoherent writers, in a very capricious and arbitrary manner, instead of the regular point. The proper use of it is, where the sentence breaks off abruptly; where the sense is suspended; where a significant pause is required; or where there is an unexpected turn in the sentiment*.

E X A M P L E S.

1. Where the sentence breaks off abruptly.

BUT oh! Ulysses—deeper than the rest,
That sad idea wounds my anxious breast †!

If thou beest he—but oh! how fallen ‡!

* See other uses of the Dash under the article ELLIPSIS, in the APPENDIX, chap. ii.

† POPE, Odyss. iv. 130.

‡ Par. Lost, b. i. 84.

Whom I—but first I'll calm the waves again *.
 Nothing, my Lord, or if—I know not what †.
 Put out the light, and then—Put out the light ‡.

The latter part of this line is a sudden start of thought, introducing some reflections on the murder of Desdemona ; and should be printed with a note of interrogation.

2. Where the sense is suspended, and continued after a short interruption.

DRAW, archers! draw !—your arrows to the head §.

The latter part of this line is an after-thought. Garrick used to pause very properly, where the dash is here inserted. The ardour and impetuosity of Richard is more naturally and forcibly expressed, by this division of the sentence, than by the regular pronounciation of the words, in the grammatical connection,

* PITT, *Æn.* b. i. 185.

† SHAKESPEARE, *Othello*, act iii. sc. 4.

‡ Ibid. act v. sc. 6.

§ SHAKESPEARE, *Rich.* III. act v. sc. 7.

Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head.

3. Where a significant pause is required.

LORD Cardinal! if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,
Hold up thy hand, make signal of that hope.—
He dies, and makes no sign *!

As an interval of silence, or a solemn pause, is absolutely necessary after the pronounciation of the second line, the dash or break may be used in this place, with great propriety.

4. Where there is an unexpected turn in the sentiment; or a sort of epigrammatic point.

HERE thou, great Anna, whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea †.

But in such lays, as neither ebb or flow,
Correctly cold, and regularly low,
That shunning faults, one quiet tenor keep;
We cannot blame indeed—but we may sleep ‡.

HERE LIES THE GREAT——false marble, where?
Nothing but fordid dust lies here.

* SHAKESPEARE Hen. VI. 2d. part, act iii. sc. 10.

† POPE, Rape of the Lock, cant. iii. 7.

‡ Id. Essay on Crit. ver. 239.

The last couplet contains a beautiful apostrophe.

In treating of the dash, and the propriety of its application, it may not be improper to subjoin a critical conjecture on the following passage in Horace, where, it seems, this mark of suspension may be properly inserted.

O, quæ beatam, diva. tenes Cyprium, et
Memphim carentem Sithonia nive,

Regina, sublimi flagel o——

Tange Chloen semel arrogantem.

Lib. iii. od. 26.

Carentem Sithonia nive is not an unmeaning phrase, as some readers may imagine: it signifies, with great propriety, that there was no *coldness* where Venus resides. Horace mentions the cold of Thrace; because Chloe was probably of that country; for according to some editions, she is elsewhere called *Thressa Chloe*. She seems to have treated him with some kind of disdain; for in another ode he says: *Vitas hinnuleo me similis, Chloe*; and he sufficiently intimates, that she was tyrannical, when he tells us, *Me Chloe* REGIT.

But observe his imbecillity! He solemnly invokes a goddess to punish the arrogance of this imperious lady. The stroke is, as it were, impending, and we are in pain for the fair criminal; when the lover instantly relents, and desires she may be—TENDERLY TREATED; TANGE SEMEL*.

Sanadon, who observed the import of *tange semel*, does not seem to have sufficiently attended to the striking opposition between these two words, and the menace, expressed by the phrase immediately preceding, SUBLIMI FLAGELLO. Yet on this opposition, this unexpected turn of sentiment and passion, the whole beauty of the passage depends.

* A remark to the same purpose was made in the STUDENT by the author of this Essay, which is misrepresented, in a translation of Horace by Mr. D.

THE CONCLUSION.

THESE rules, I must confess, are liable to SOME exceptions, and are not sufficient to direct the learner in EVERY imaginable combination of words and phrases. It would indeed be impossible to frame such a system of rules, as should comprehend the whole extent of our language. But the foregoing remarks and examples will enable any one, of a tolerable capacity, to form a competent idea of this important subject ; and to divide his sentences, both in reading and writing, with greater accuracy and precision, than they are usually divided in the generality of books, wherein the punctuation is arbitrary and capricious, and founded on no general principles.

A P P E N D I X.

C H A P. I

Of the USE of CAPITAL LETTERS.

THE Hebrew and other oriental alphabets have no distinction between great and small letters; and the Greeks and Romans for a long time made use of only capitals in their writings.

It was usual with our ancestors, both in writing and printing, to begin every noun with a capital. But this custom, which was always troublesome, and not in the least useful or ornamental, is now entirely discontinued; and small letters are used in all common words. It is however very proper to begin with a capital,

1. The first word of every book, chapter, letter, note, or any other piece of writing.

2. The first word after a period ; and, if the two sentences be **TOTALLY INDEPENDENT**, after a note of interrogation or exclamation,

But if a number of interrogative or exclamatory sentences are thrown into one general group ; or if the construction of the latter sentences depends on the former, all of them, except the first, may begin with a small letter : as,

How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity ? and the scorers delight in their scorning ? and fools hate knowledge * ?

Alas ! how different ! yet how like the same † !

3. The appellations of the Deity : as God, Jehovah, the Almighty, the Supreme Being, the Lord, Providence, the Messiah, the Holy Spirit.

4. Titles of honour and respect in direct addresses ‡ : as, your Highness, your

* Prov. i. 22. See other examples, ch. vi. § 1.

† POPE, II. xxiii. 129.

‡ This rule may admit of some variation.

Grace, your Lordship, your Excellence,
my Lord, my Lady, Sir, Madam.

5. Proper names of persons, places,
streets, mountains, rivers, ships, months,
days of the week : as, George, London,
the Strand, the Alps, the Thames, the
Centaur, April, Sunday.

6. Adjectives, derived from the proper
names of places : as, Grecian, Roman,
English, French, Italian, Alpian.

7. The titles of books : as, Pope's
Rape of the Lock, Swift's Tale of a
Tub, Thomson's Seasons.

8. Words of particular importance :
as, the Reformation, the Restoration, the
Revolution.

9. The first word of every line in poe-
try.

10. The first word of a quotation, in-
troduced after a colon, or in a direct
form, thus : Pythagoras says, " Rever-
ence thyself." But when a quotation is
brought in obliquely after a comma, a

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capital is unnecessary: as, Plato observes,
 "that GOD geometrizes *."

11. The pronoun I, and the interjection O, are written in capitals: as, I write. Hear, O heavens!

It is something remarkable, that in OTHER languages, the pronoun of the first person singular is usually written with a small letter: as, *ego*, Gr. *ego*, Lat. *ic*. Sax. *je*, Fr. *io*, Ital. *yo*, Span. *eu*, Port. *ich*. Germ. *ik*, Dut.

We seem to be the only people, who have dignified the little hero with a capital.

Maittaire, in his English Grammar, printed in 1712, and some other writers, have used the small *i*; but it is not probable, that this method will ever be generally adopted.

* Plato dixisse creditur, Deum ipsum γεωμετρειν.
 ERASMI Adag. p. 710, edit. 1629.

C H A P. II.

CHARACTERS in grammar, rhetoric, and
poetry, explained.

A	Postrophe	,
	Asterisk	*
Brace		}
Caret		^
Cedilla		ç
Crotchets		[]
Diæresis or dialysis		..
Ellipsis	— or	
Hyphen		-
Index		☞
Obelisk		†
Paragraph		¶
Quotation		“ ”
Section		§
Acute accent		´
Grave		`

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Circumflex	^
Spiritus asper	·
Spiritus lenis	˘
Long syllable	—
Short syllable	◡

An Apostrophe ' [from ἀποτροπή averto] in grammar, denotes the turning away or the omission of one or more letters : as, 'tis for it is, th' for the, tho' for though, I'll for I will, lov'd for loved, e'en for even, heav'n for heaven, se'nnight for sevensnight, o'clock for on the clock, king's palace for kinges palace.

KING's is the genitive or possessive case. We have derived this termination from our Saxon ancestors. In the Saxon language there are six, or, according to some grammarians, seven declensions ; and three of them form the genitive singular, by taking es : as, Smith, smithes ; andgit, andgites [understanding] word, wordes. Upon this principle the Saxon writers say, Titus, gen. Titufes ; Ninus,

Ninuses; Julius, Juliuses; Hannibal, Hannibales; God, Godes; Christ, Christes; man, mannes. Gower, Chaucer, and other ancient authors, use the same termination: as, Goddes folke, worldes welth, kynges lawe, ladyes name, knightes tales, Cupides bow, &c. Instead of the *e* we now use an apostrophe †.

An Asterisk or little star * directs the reader to some note in the margin, or at the bottom of the page. Two or three asterisks generally denote the omission of some letters in a word, or of some bold or indelicate expression, or some defect in the manuscript.

A Brace } is used in poetry, at the end of a triplet, or three lines, which have the same rhyme: as,

Waller was smooth; but Dryden taught to join }
The varying verse, the full-resounding line, }
The long, majestic march, and energy divine ‡. }

† See Observations on the sign of the possessive case in the Critical Review for Jan. 1777; and in the Biographical Anecdotes of Mr. Bowyer, p. 477, by the author of this Essay.

‡ Porz, Imit, of Hor. l. ii. ep. i.

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Braces are also used to connect a number of words with one common term, and are merely calculated to prevent a repetition in writing or printing.

A Caret ^ [from careo, to want] shews the place, where a letter or word, omitted by mistake, and written above the line, is to be introduced.

Cedilla or Cerilla ç, in some French words, is a curve line under the letter c, before a, o, u, shewing, that it has the sound of s, which it always has before e and i, and not that of k: as, *força* he forced, *garçon* a boy, *reçu* received; pronounced, *forfa*, *garson*, *ressu*.

The cedilla was formerly used by Spanish writers for the same purpose; but it is thought superfluous, by several modern grammarians *, in the Spanish language; and the z is used instead of it.

Crotchets or Brackets [] serve to enclose a word or sentence, which is to be explained in a note; or the explanation itself; or a word or sentence, which is intended to supply some deficiency, or rectify some mistake: as,

* STEVENS'S Span. Gram. p. 10, edit. 1739.

Pelides] Achilles, the son of Peleus.
 Madam [from ma dam, Fr.] a complimentary term, used in addressing ladies of every degree.

"He restores to [the inhabitants of] his island that tranquility, to which they had been strangers, during his absence *." A well wrote [well written] treatise.

The word or sentence, included within the crotchets, is called a parathesis; and sometimes the character itself is distinguished by the same appellation.

Diæresis " [from διαίρω, divido] or Dialysis [from διαλύω, dissolvo] is used when two vowels come together, and make two distinct syllables. In this case, these two points are usually placed over the latter vowel: as, coëval, ærial, Simoïs, Boötes, Coös, Iülus.

Ellipsis — [from ελλείπω, deficio] is used, when some letters in a word, or some words in a verse, are omitted: as, the k—g, for the king.

The dash is frequently used by rhapsodists, instead of the regular points.

* POPE, Dissert. on the Odysey, § 3.

A Hyphen – [from *υφ' εν, sub unum*] is employed in connecting compounded words: as, Lap-dog, tea-pot, pre-existence, self-love, to-morrow.

It is also used, when a word is divided and the former part is written or printed at the end of one line, and the latter part at the beginning of another. In this case, it is placed at the end of the first line, not at the beginning of the second.

An Index or Hand  points out a remarkable passage, or something that requires particular attention.

An Obelisk or Dagger † [from *obelos*, a spit or dagger] refers to some marginal note; or, in dictionaries, to some obsolete or barbarous word.

A Paragraph ¶ [from *παραγραφω, ad-scribo*] denotes the beginning of a new subject, or a sentence not connected with the foregoing. This character is chiefly used in the Old and New Testament.

A Quotation “ ”. Two inverted commas are generally placed at the beginning of a phrase or a passage, which is quoted or transcribed from some au-

thor, in his own words; and two apostrophes, in their direct position, are placed at the conclusion : as,

An excellent poet says :

“ The proper study of mankind is man”.

A Section § [from *feco*, to cut] is used in some books for subdividing a chapter into smaller parts. It seems to be made of *ss*, and to be an abbreviation of *signum sectionis*, the sign of the section *.

The acute accent', in the Greek language, as Grammarians tell us, denotes an elevation of the voice. It is placed on long and short syllables without distinction : on long syllables in *νυμφη, μήτηρ, πορώνη*; and on short ones in *τεφάνη, θεράπων, καλαμην, Περσεφόνη*; &c.

The grave ` signifies a depression. It is however, strictly speaking, nothing more than the privation of the acute. This mark is placed on the last syllable

* MARTINII Lexic. in voce PARAGRAPHUS.

only ; but is understood on every syllable, on which there is no accent ; as on the latter syllable of *τυπλω*.

The circumflex ~ marks an elevation and depression on the same syllable ; that is, a kind of undulation or quavering of the voice *. It is placed on long syllables only.

This character was originally † formed by uniting the acute and the grave ^ . Afterwards it was changed into the figure of the ancient sigma, placed horizontally ~ . Lastly, it was drawn in an undulatory form, in this manner ~ . The modern circumflex seems to be an arbitrary and unmeaning flourish.

* *Accentus acutus ideo insertus est, quod acuat sive elevet syllabam ; gravis, ideo quod deprimat aut deponat ; circumflexus eo, quod deprimat atque acuat.*
PRISCIAN. p. 1286, edit. Putichii.

† PRIMATT ON Accents, p. 21. *Vocalis ā longa, ǣ brevis. Spiritus F A asper, † lenis. Accentus A' gravis, A' acutus, Ǽ ^ ~ circumflexus, ante Chr. 500 inter poetas super voces dubias depicti, et encliticas et rho ρ ; sed A. D. 306. super omnes in lectionariis Christianis, BERNARDI Orb. erud. Literat. tab. xxx.*

Many volumes have been written concerning the antiquity of these accents * ; but the time of their first introduction cannot be determined with any precision. It is probable, that some accentual marks were used by the Greeks two or three hundred years before the birth of Christ ; but they seem to have been, for a long time, confined to the schools of the grammarians. Montfaucon, who ascribes the invention to Aristophanes, asserts, that there is no appearance of them in manuscripts, which were written before the seventh century ; that, in manuscripts of the seventh and eighth, they are frequently misplaced, and often omitted ; that in the two following centuries writers began to use them with more accura-

* See GALLY'S Dissertation against pronouncing the Greek Language according to Accents. 1754 FOSTER'S Essay on Accent and Quantity, 1762 and 1763. PRIMATT'S Defence of an accented Pronunciation of Greek Prose, 1764, &c

The design of Dr. Gally's Dissertation is to shew, "that the modern way of placing accents in the ancient Greek language is wrong ; because it is, 1. very arbitrary and uncertain ; 2. contrary to analogy, reason, and quantity ; and, 3. contrary to itself."

cy ; and that from this period, we may date their general introduction *.

The PRESENT SYSTEM of Greek accents is certainly of modern date † ; and, it may be presumed, is a useless incumbrance on the language. The art of reading Greek by accent and quantity, at the same time, is not likely to be introduced ; or if it should be attempted, it

The leading principle in Mr. Foster's Essay is a supposition, that the nature and power of the acute accent was only to elevate the voice, without giving any prolongation of time to the accented syllable ; and of the grave accent to depress it, without occasioning any contraction or quicker transition of the syllables so depressed.

Mr. Primatt endeavours to prove, "that verse and prose were read differently ; the one according to quantity, the other by accent." p. 128.

* *Consuetudinem vero describendi accentus et spiritus in septimum circitur a Christo nato sæculum conferri posse videtur. Nam codices quinti sextive seculi, quorum quidam notam temporis præferunt, iis prorsus carent . . . In codicibus ejusdem [septimi] ævi, accentus et spiritus identidem omittuntur, neque tanta occupatione describuntur . . . Cum semel eorum usus inventus est, alii accuratius, alii negligentius, pro cuiusque arbitrio, accentus perscribebant. MONTF. Palæog. Græca, p. 223, 224, et alibi.*

† SPELMAN'S Observations on the Greek Accents, § 5. P. 18.

will be utterly impossible to ascertain the genuine tones, with which the language was pronounced by the ancient Greeks.

The Romans seldom, if ever, used any tonical or accentual marks *.

At present, the acute is placed, in Latin books, on the last syllable of words, to which the enclitics, *que, ve, ne,* are annexed : as, *laurúsque, bellúmve, decúf-ne, &c.*

The grave is employed to mark adverbs : as, *contrà, latè, utì, subitò, ni-miùm* ; the prepositions *à* and *è*, &c.

The circumflex serves to mark the ablative case of the first declension, the genitive of the fourth, the elision of a letter or a syllable, &c. and always denotes a long syllable : as *hâc musâ, hujus manûs, virûm* for *virorum, nôsti* for *novisti, amârunt* for *amaverunt*.

Of all the modern languages, the French has the greatest number of accents. Take the following words as a specimen : *L'épée, dèsà-présent, tête á tête, légè-*

* FOSTER'S Essay on Accent and Quantity, p. 115, edit. 1763.

reté, témérité, préféré, pénétré, répété, invétére, dégénéré, le général eût été dégouté, &c. Our language has happily escaped this horrid incumbrance, and preserved a beautiful simplicity. In English the accentual marks are only used in spelling-books and dictionaries, to mark the syllables, which require a particular stress of the voice in pronunciation.

This stress is laid on long and short syllables indiscriminately. In order to distinguish one from the other, some dictionary writers have placed the grave on the former, and the acute on the latter, in this manner: Mînor, min'eral, li'vely, liv'id, ri'val, ri'ver.

Spiritus Asper, an aspirate, is peculiar to the Greek language, and implies, that the letters over which it is placed, should be pronounced with a rough breathing, or as if they were preceded by an h.

Among the ancient Greeks the H, that is, the letter eta, supplied this office: as, HEKATON centum, HOΔΟΣ via, for εκατον, ὁδος. This character, we are told, was afterwards divided into two parts;

the left side *h* making the rough, and the right, *h̄*, the smooth breathing *.

From this character the Latin *h*, and the modern languages, have borrowed their *h*: as, *hora* from *ώρα*, *hesperus* from *ἑσπερος*.

The Lenis *h̄* denoted a smooth breathing. Every word in Greek, which begins with a vowel, has either an asper or a lenis prefixed. The asper should be retained; but the lenis is absolutely useless.

A long Syllable *h̄*. A syllable is long, when the voice dwells longer upon it, than upon other syllables in the same word; or when it rests upon a vowel or diphthong: as, *Pactolus*, *Cocytus*, *Euripus*, *Mausoleum*, *horizon*.

* Spirituum asperi et lenis schemata est litera *H*, duas in partes divisa, notavit Aristophanes; ita ut prima pars ejusdem characteris asperum spiritum denotaret, secunda residua, tenuem. MONTF. Palæog. Græca, p. 33. SEAL. de Causis Ling. Lat. c. 54.

† Οἱμαὶ δὲ καὶ διὰ τοῦ *H* σοιχείου τυπώσασθαι τοὺς παλαιοὺς τὴν δασειαν* διόπερ καὶ Ῥωμαῖοι προ πάντων τῶν δασυνομένων ὀνομάτων τὸ *H* προγράφουσι. "I think the ancient Greeks represented the aspirate by the letter *H*; and therefore the Romans prefix an *H* to all words, which are to be aspirated." ΑΤΗΝ. Deipnos. l. ix. c. 12, p. 398, edit. 1589.

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A short Syllable $\sim$. A syllable is short, when the voice passes rapidly over the vowel: as, Caucāsus, Lotophāgi, Areop^gus, Antipodes.

Demetrius Triclinius, who lived about the beginning of the fourteenth century, having ascribed to the old Greek grammarians the invention of tones and spirits, adds: “ Besides these, they invented this mark $\bar$, as the sign of a long syllable, and this $\sim$, as the sign of a short one*.”

These marks are still used in treatises of prosody, and in Latin dictionaries.

* Πρὸς ταῦτοις, δεῖται μακρὰς μὲν σημεῖον τοῦ $\bar$, τῆς δὲ βραχείας τοῦ $\sim$. DEMET. TRICLIN. in Præf. ad Aristophanem.

CHARACTERS,

C H A P. III

Abbreviations, and some technical terms relative to books.

Fol. **FOLIO.** A book is said to be in folio, when one sheet of paper makes only two leaves, or four pages.

4 to. Quarto, when one sheet makes four leaves, or eight pages.

8 vo. Octavo, eight leaves.

12mo. Duodecimo, twelve leaves, usually called twelves.

24^o. ————twenty-four leaves, usually called twenty-fours.

The Frontispiece, the picture facing the title-page.

The Title-page, the first page of every book, containing the title.

The Running Title, the word or sentence at the top of every page.

A Column. When the page is divided into several parts by a blank space, or

P I T A L L E T T E R S,

running from the top to the bottom of each division is called a column : as in bibles, dictionaries, news-papers,

B, C, and A 2, A 3, &c. at the bottom of the page, are marks for directing the book-binder, in collecting and folding the sheets.

The Catchword, the word at the bottom of the page, on the right hand, which is repeated at the beginning of the next, in order to shew, that the pages succeed one another in proper order.

*†§||. references to notes in the margin.

The Italic characters were invented and introduced by Aldus Manutius, a celebrated Venetian printer, in the year 1501. They are sometimes called cursive, from their resembling what is termed a running hand; and sometimes Aldine, from the inventor.

The Italic words in the Old and New Testament are those, which have no corresponding words in the original Hebrew or Greek ; but are added by the translators, to complete or explain the sense.

C H A P. IV.

Abbreviations of Latin words, frequently found in printed books and manuscripts.

- Lib. **L** I B E R, book.
- MS. **M** a n u s c r i p t u m, manuscript.
- MSS. **M** a n u s c r i p t a, manuscripts.
- P. S. **P** o s t - s c r i p t u m, a postscript, or something written afterwards.
- N. B. **N** o t a b e n e, mark well, note, or observe.
- v. g. **V** e r b i g r a t i â, for instance, if the example is but one word.
- e. g. **E** x e m p l i g r a t i â, for example.
- viz. **V** i d e l i c e t, namely. **Viz.** is a corrupt abbreviation.
- i. e. **I** d e s t, that is.
- v. **V** i d e, see.
- Id. **I** d e m, the same [author].
- Ibid. **I** b i d e m, in the same place [book].

N. Numero, in number.

q. d. Quasi dicas, as if you should say.

&c. Et cætera, and others. When this character is placed after a list of men, it should be called et cæteri; after a list of women, et cæteræ; and after a variety of things in the neuter gender, et cætera, as it is usually pronounced.

ȳ. yt. The, that. It is probable, that th, in these abbreviations, was originally expressed by the Saxon þ, th; and that this character has gradually degenerated into y.

C H A P. V.

Abbreviations in titles of honour.

G. R. **G**EORGIUS Rex, George
the King.

K. G. Knight of the Garter.

K. B. Knight of the Bath.

K. T. Knight of the Thistle.

S. T. P. Sacrae theologiae professor, pro-
fessor of divinity : Latin terms
for D. D.

D. D. Doctor of divinity.

M. D. Medicinae doctor, doctor of phy-
sic.

LLD. Legum doctor, doctor of laws,
that is, the canon and civil
laws.

J.U.D, Juris utriusque doctor, doctor of
laws.

B. D. Bachelor of divinity.

A. M. Artium magister, master of arts,

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A. B. Artium baccalaureus, bachelor of
arts.

F. R. S. Fellow of the royal society.

R. S. S. Regiæ societatis focius, fellow
of the royal society.

S. A. S. Societatis antiquariæ focius, fel-
low of the antiquarian society.

C H A P. VII.

Abbreviations in arithmetic and commerce.

- L. **L** I B R A, a pound in money.
- S. **S**OLIDUS, a shilling.
- D. **D**ENARIUS [quòd nummos *denos æris* valebat. VARRO, l. iv.] The Roman denarius was a silver coin, equal to ten *asses* or seven pence three farthings of English money. It is used in our law-books for a penny. Our translators render *δυο δηνάρια*, Luke x. 35, *two pence*, very improperly; as these words give us a false idea of the good Samaritan's generosity. There is the same misrepresentation, Mat. xviii. 28. xx. 2. xxii. 19. Mar. vi. 37. John vi. 7.
- Ob. **O**BOLUS [from the Attic *ὀβολός*] a half-penny. The obolus was the sixth part of the denarius; in English money, five farthings and one sixth,

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Q. Quadrans, a farthing. The Roman quadrans was the fourth part of the *as*, and equal to about three quarters of a farthing. *Kodgarus* is translated, a farthing, Mat. v. 26. The *as* [derived from *æs*, brass] was the tenth part of the denarius, and equal to three farthings and one tenth, in English money.

Per cent. Per centum, by the hundred.

Per an. Per annum, by the year.

D^o. Ditto [from detto, Ital.] the said.

N^o. Numero, in number.

℔. Libra, a pound; twelve ounces of Troy weight, used by goldsmiths, apothecaries, &c. and sixteen ounces of avoirdupois.

C H A P. VIII.

Abbreviations and characters in medicinal prescriptions.

R.
ana.

RECIPE, take.
From the Greek preposition *ana* of each, an equal quantity of several ingredients.

℔.

Libra, a pound, in apothecaries weight is twelve ounces.

3

An ounce, or eight drams.

3

A drachm, or three scruples.
Drachm is commonly written and pronounced *dram*.

ð

A scruple, or twenty grains.

gr.

A grain. There are 5760 grains in a pound.

P.

Pugillum, a pugil; that is, such a quantity of flowers, seeds, or the like, as may be taken up between the thumb and the two fore-fingers. It is accounted the eighth part of the manipule. I 2

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M. Manipulus, a handful, or as much as a man can grasp in his hand at once.

Cong. Congius, a gallon.

Cochl. Cochleare, a spoonful, that is, half an ounce of syrups ; but only three drams of distilled waters *.

Ss. Semis, half.

Q. s. Quantum sufficit, a sufficient quantity.

Q. l. Quantum libet, as much as you please.

S. a. Secundum artem, according to the rules of art.

* JAMES'S Dispens. p. 447.

C H A P. IX.

Of NUMERAL LETTERS.

NUMBERS are written two different ways, by letters and by figures:

	Roman Numerals.	Figures.
One	I	1
Two	II	2
Three	III	3
Four	IV	4
Five	V	5
Six	VI	6
Seven	VII	7
Eight	VIII	8
Nine	IX	9
Ten	X	10
Twenty	XX	20
Thirty	XXX	30
Forty	XL	40
Fifty	L	50

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Sixty	LX	60
Seventy	LXX	70
Eighty	LXXX	80
Ninety	XC	90
A hundred	C	100
Two hundred	CC	200
Three hundred	CCC	300
Four hundred	CCCC or CD	400
Five hundred	D or ID	500
Six hundred	DC	600
Seven hundred	DCC	700
Eight hundred	DCCC	800
Nine hundred	DCCCC or CM	900
A thousand	M or CIJ	1000
Five thousand	IDJ	5,000
Ten thousand	CCIDJ	10,000
Fifty thousand	IDJJ	50,000
A hundred thousand	CCCIDJJ	100,000
Five hundred thousand	IDJJJ	500,000
A million	CCCCIDJJJ	1,000,000

The Romans expressed any number of thousands, by a line drawn over a numeral, less than a thousand: thus, $\overline{V}$ denotes five thousand, $\overline{LX}$, sixty thousand.

So likewise M stands for one thousand times a thousand, or a million; $\overline{MM}$, two millions, &c.

Numeral letters explained.

MDCCLXXXIX, 1789.

M denotes mille, 1,000.

D dimidium mille, half a thousand, or 500; or it is probable the half of CIO .

C centum, 100.

L represents the lower half of C ; and consequently expresses 50.

X resembles two V s, the one upright, the other inverted; and signifies 10.

V stands for 5, because its sister letter U is the fifth vowel.

I signifies one, probably because it is the plainest and simplest character in the alphabet,

If two or three of these characters are placed together, and the less number is placed before the greater, the value of the less is to be deducted from the greater; as, IX, nine; XIX, 19; CD, 400; CM, 900, &c.

Other reasons are given for the use of these particular letters by learned writers; but all of them seem to be uncertain conjectures *.

* Vid. PRISC. lib. de Fig. Numer. edit. Putschii, p. 1346. ALDI MANUTII Veter. Not. Explan. SCALIG. de Causis Ling. Lat. l. i. c. 41. HOFM. Lexic. in voce NUMERI. MARTINII Lexic. Etymologicum.

C H A P. X.

Of ARITHMETICAL FIGURES.

THE art of computing by figures, and the cipher o, which, when placed at the right hand of the figure, encreases its value in a tenfold proportion, is a happy invention; but of modern date.

CIPHER is derived from the Hebrew ספר *sepher*, a number; or from Arabic ziphra, which has precisely the meaning we annex to the word cipher, that is, figura nihil significans, vulgarly called a nought.

The origin of these figures is uncertain. Some writers affirm, that the Spaniards and other Europeans took them from the Moors, the Moors from the Arabians, and the Arabians from the Persians or Indians. This was the opinion of Ger. Joh. Vossius, Mr. Greaves, Bishop Beveridge, Dr. Wallis, and many others *.

* Voss. de Natura Art. lib. iii. c. 8. § 6. GREAVES, de Signis Arabum et Persarum Astronomicis, p. 2. BEVERIDGE, Arithmetica Chronologica, l. i. c. 5. WALLIS, Algebra, c. 3, 4. Phil. Trans. No. 439. ERPEN. Gram. Arab. l. i. c. i. p. 17. HOFM. Lexic. in voce NUMERI et SIFRA.

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Jof. Scaliger *, Ger. John Voffius, and P. Mabillon †, thought that these figures were not used long before the year 1300. Matthew Paris tells us that they were introduced into England by John de Basingestokes, in the year 1252 ‡. Dr. Wallis is of opinion, that they were brought into England about the year 1130.

Others have imagined, that they are only the letters of the Greek alphabet, corrupted and altered by transcribers §.

* Lib. iii. ep. 223.

† De Re diplomatica.

‡ Hic Johannes [de Basingestokes] figuras Græcorum numerales, et earum notitiam et significationes in Angliam portavit et familiaribus suis declaravit. MAT. PARIS, Hist. Angl. sub an. 1252, p. 35.

§ MAT. PARIS, p. 835. RHUMANNI Roma Attica, p. 43. Is. VOSS. in Observat. ad Pomp. Melam. l. i. c. 12. HURT. Demonstr. evang. prop. iv. c. 13. num. 9. Addenda, p. 647. edit. 1679. WARD, Phil. Transf. No 439.

Dr. BERNARD says: Notæ Numerales, 1. Indorum & Græc. A. D. 716. 2. Arabum et Persarum ex Arabico. A. D. 1000. Orb. crud. Liter. tab. vii.

According to this hypothesis.

1 is derived from *ι*, *iota* [or probably it stands for *one*, because it is only a simple stroke.]

2 from *β*.

3 — *γ*.

4 — *Δ*.

5 — *ε*.

6 — *ς*, the numeral character of the Greeks for six, called *episeimon* *βαι*.

7 — *ζ* or *Z*.

8 — *Η*, incurvated at the top and bottom.

9 — *θ*.

ο — the initial letter of *οὐδεν* nothing. [This derivation is a little too far fetched.]

It is observable, that all these letters, except *ι* and *ο*, were used by the Greeks to express the same numbers, as the figures, which are here supposed to be derived from them; and that *ι* and *ο* are Greek letters, though here deprived of the nu-

meral powers, which they had among the Greeks, the former originally signifying *ten*, and the latter *seventy*. The resemblance between the figures 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and the corresponding letters, is obvious; and much greater, than the most acute observer can discover between the same figures, and any Indian or Arabic characters. Such a similarity could not happen by accident. But admitting, that, in some instances, the resemblance is obscure and evanescent, this hypothesis should not, on that account, be rejected. The Roman alphabet is derived from that of the Greeks *; yet the affinity between some of the Greek and Roman letters is now imperceptible. In former ages, writers made considerable changes in the original form of their characters. In latter times, letters and numeral figures owe their uniformity and stability to the art of printing.

* *Formæ literis Latinis, quæ veterrimis Græcorum*
TACIT. *Annal.* l. xi. c. 14. *PLIN.* l. vii. c. 57, 58.

F I N I S.



ERS.

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7, 58.